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AFTER.

BY T. F. R.

Now that the mirth and gladness
Of the vanished Christmas time
Are set to the music of the past,
Like a sweet, old-fashioned rhyme—
Like a rhyme whose silvery measure
To a once familiar tune,
We hear, through the whir of her busy wheel,
Some quaint old housewife croon.

And now that the Christmas garlands—
The holly and mistletoe—
Are withering on the wainscot,
In the yule fire's dying glow,
I sit at my lonely hearth-side,
And the silence and dimness fall,
And the lurking shadows of evening glide,
Like phantoms along the wall.

In a passion of grief and pining,
My desolate heart in vain
Yearns for the patter of little feet
That never will come again!
And the lights of a bygone Christmas
Shine faint in a mist of tears,
Where a wee grave's lengthening shadow falls,
And darkens the coming years!

Hush! I hear the echo
Of footsteps at the door;
A glimmer of snow-white garments
Is stealing across the floor;
And there, in the grotesque shadow
Of the antique chimney tall,
The ripple of yellow ringlets
Is flitting along the wall!

Ah, no! My fond heart cheats me
With the empty shapes of air,
And the firelight's fitful flicker
Is the gleam of the golden hair;
For straight lie the folds, and stirless—
No earthly wind shall move—
Of the shroud that covers my darling,
Away from my yearning love.

THE KING'S RUBIES

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A TERRIBLE PENALTY," "HIS DEAREST SIN," "MISS FORRISTER'S LAND STEWARD," ETC., ETC.

[The following is a synopsis of "The King's Rubies" so far as published. Derek Esdaile, an English gentleman, has married, after love at first sight, Teresa Maubray, a young girl, a fine singer, whom little is as yet known about, only that she has the protection and patronage of fashionable friends. Several singular robberies of diamonds and plate have taken place in the residences of the people of her circle. Esdaile befriends a burglar who seems to be more unfortunate than criminal, named Frank Varcoe, who is mixed up with a gang called The Invincibles. This Varcoe was once the lover of Alice Winn, a tenant of Esdaile. The latter gives a party and dinner at his place, Leigh's Hollow. During the festivities the jewels always worn by the Esdaile brides, known as the King's Rubies, and about which a tradition hangs that they bring luck, are stolen and Teresa also mysteriously disappears. Esdaile, who thinks she is murdered or abducted, gets the detectives at work on the case and also asks Varcoe to help him find her. The latter sets diligently to work, but is so far unsuccessful in even gaining a clue. Mrs. Gifford is a widow interested in Esdaile, and at whose home he first met Teresa. The Wyndhams are mutual friends. With these details the story may be continued in the following chapters.]

CHAPTER XXII.—(CONTINUED.)

"ONLY things forced upon one," replied Esdaile through his teeth, "till they can't be borne! One can stand silence; but words kill!" He sprang to his feet and began pacing the room.

"I've been to see Lady Wyndham, and Mrs. Gifford was there. I haven't seen her since—since——" His voice faltered, he stood still a moment in the shadow, then suddenly came back to the fire and sank into his chair.

"She tortured me with questions," he muttered. "She brought it all back! What does she care for either of us save as stepping stones? She plays for her own hand still, as she always did! I will have none of it! I wish to Heaven I hadn't seen her!"

Some of this speech had little meaning for Varcoe. He remembered Esdaile's mentioning a lady with whom his wife had lived, and saying that he did not like her.

Probably this was the lady he had seen to-day. Derek was walking up and down again, pulling himself together fiercely, and the man's eyes followed him wistfully. Desiring to soften Esdaile's mood by sympathy, he said—

"That isn't the lady you told me Mrs. Esdaile lived with—is it, sir?"

"Did I tell you of her? When? Oh, at Leigh's Hollow! You had some idea she was jealous. Yes—the same; Mrs. Gifford. I never liked her—never treated her. She only helped me because she wanted to get into society, and she thought she could make me the means."

Varcoe looked puzzled. Esdaile, as he once more sat down, noticed the expression on his companion's face. It was a relief to get away from himself and explain.

"You can't understand," he said. "I call Mrs. Gifford a lady—it's a sort of courtesy—she is not one really. Whether her husband was a gentleman and married beneath him, or whether he was nothing of the sort, Heaven knows! Anyhow, she has been trying to push into society, to which she has no right. That's why she took up my wife."

He paused, but, finding that Varcoe remained silent, went on.

"She thought she had a claim on me through my wife. What do I owe her? Simply nothing. She professes interest because she wants to get hold of me."

"You said once, sir," Varcoe ventured, "you thought she was fond of Mrs. Esdaile."

"Did I? How you remember things! I forget them often now. Perhaps I was right; and I may be unjust now. She wrote me a letter that was kind enough; but when I see her, all her kindness seems false."

Varcoe glanced keenly at Esdaile, who never seemed conscious of his own attractions. The idea of jealousy on the part of Mrs. Gifford—jealousy of a young pretty girl—seemed perfectly probable. Was Esdaile right in so entirely repudiating it? Knowing him better now than when he had tentatively pronounced the idea, Varcoe could see how blinding this lack of self-consciousness would be. The desire to crush a rival and win a lover would form a very possible solution of the puzzle, and Esdaile, passionately in love, would have easily mistaken Mrs. Gifford's motive in encouraging him at her house.

"Hadn't Mrs. Gifford money?" asked Varcoe.

"Oh, yes; she lived in good style."

"And she was handsome, I suppose, sir?"

"Certainly handsome. Not very refined; but still—— Why?"

"She might have made a good match, sir, and got along in that way."

"Yes; but she never struck any one as a husband-hunter. It would have been the easiest way—only perhaps she hadn't enough money. What are you thinking of, Varcoe? I always know when you have some idea in your head."

"You're too quick, sir," replied the man, smiling. "'Tisn't a new idea; but you wouldn't take it up last time, so I didn't want you to guess. It would be a good enough reason."

"You think Mrs. Gifford was in love with me?" said Esdaile, flushing.

"Well, sir, it might be. I took your word that it wasn't so; but she seems to keep up a lot of interest in you, and perhaps it isn't all make-believe, as you say. An angry jealous woman—well, she won't stop at much."

"But you are wrong, Varcoe—she didn't care for me or any one; she wasn't even a flirt. Besides, I have told you she threw Teresa in my way."

"Perhaps you wouldn't see her game quite," said Varcoe, smiling again. "You'll excuse me saying you're a little bit odd in that way, sir; and then you were set on Miss Teresa—as was then—and you wouldn't notice. The thought comes back to me when you tell me all these things about Mrs Gifford."

"But do you imagine she would let me alone all this time? I have had one letter from her. I have not seen her till to-day; and she has made no effort to see me. Besides, as I think I said before—didn't I?—a scheme such as you have in your mind wants money, and a much more diabolical nature than I fancy she has."

"You said you didn't trust her, sir."

"I've a feeling that she would be capable of a good deal—I allow that; I always had it; but still I am not sure that I am right. I am certain you are wrong, Varcoe. I don't think she could fall in love; she only cared for title and big crushes and the best of everything.

"Why, she was always giving me charge of Teresa"—his voice softened—"leaving her to me, making her send me the invitations. Do you think she would have acted so if your theory was correct?"

"No, sir—I suppose not," admitted Varcoe, gazing into the fire, scarcely knowing what he was thinking of. He started when Esdaile spoke again.

"That solution won't do. I begin to think there is none."

"Oh, sir, don't you lose heart—that'll never do! There's that dream you told me of, and the story about the rubies—their helping their owner out of troubles, I mean. You said those kind of things were sent——"

Varcoe hesitated and dropped his voice; he touched on such subjects with the diffidence of the man reverent by nature and training, but to whom religion has become an unknown thing.

Esdaile had not the heart to damp a faith he had himself inspired, and which seemed to rebuke him with its simple confidence. His own faith failed often, and what was at one time a message of hope in darker moments was an empty fable.

This was one of those moments when heart and brain and physique were too worn out to recover from deep despondency. For Varcoe's sake however he forced a smile, which encouraged the man to add cheerfully—

"I've got more ways than one, sir. I'll turn some of them over presently; it'll go hard if one don't suit. Those 'Invincibles' have puzzled me with some new way of working they've got; but I'll get round them and find them out—so I'll be off, sir!"

When Varcoe reached his decently furnished lodgings, he sat down by the fire, into which he stared persistently.

Presently he began to walk up and down, and lighted one of the cigars he had brought away with him. The evening wore on, cold and cheerless outside; but he did not notice it, and his cigar went out.

"If it isn't a tangle!" his thoughts ran. "There's Mr. Esdaile breaking his heart over it—and little wonder! He'd better know her dead at once if she's got into the 'Invincible hands—unless Dick knew. If they had a hand in this affair, they work different like.

"We never did things like that. "It wasn't the servants, but it was some one who knew the house—I'll bet my life on that."

He sat down again, and fixed his gaze upon the fire, thinking over the conversation of that afternoon, Esdaile's breakdown, and the cause of it. Suddenly he sprang to his feet, his dark eyes flashing.

"By Heaven, if it isn't Dick!" he exclaimed, and began pacing the room again, his face glowing with excitement.

The man had never looked so handsome even in his happy days. He sank into the chair again presently; the glow and the light had faded, a mist was before him, and there was a very tender expression in his eyes.

"To-night!" he muttered. "No—I'll let him sleep out to night, Heaven bless him! I'll work it out and make sure before I say a word; it'd kill me to let him have a hope and find it no good. But, if it's good—if—— I'll give her back to him!"

He covered his face with his hands and sobbed with passionate joy.

CHAPTER XXIII.

"A PERSON wishes to see you, ma'am," said Mrs. Gifford's man servant, entering the drawing room where his mistress was sitting.

Blanche was seated by the fire, with her hands in her lap; she was not a woman of many occupations, and, if she had not to go out or receive, she was idle.

"A person? What sort of a person?" she inquired.

"Well, ma'am, I hardly know. Very respectable-looking."

"Some one asking for money, I suppose," she said, in a careless tone. "Show him into the dining room, and remain there till I come. These people are sometimes thieves. Yes—I'd better see him," she thought, when the man had gone. "I dare say it is he."

She swept downstairs into the dining room. The servant was at the sideboard pretending to arrange certain articles; the "person" was sitting on a chair at the end of the room, and rose as the lady entered. He was slightly built for a man evidently past middle age; his hair and thick beard were of a ruddy tint, his somewhat sombre black clothing was of a rather unfashionable cut, and his black kid gloves were a size too large.

Blanche bowed, with a keen glance under her eyelids. This was not the "person" she had expected. The stranger bent his head with an apologetic smile, and the servant, glancing at his mistress and her visitor retired.

"Pray sit down," said Mrs. Gifford. "May I inquire your business?" Again she surveyed the stranger, then sat down, relieved.

"I have taken the liberty of calling, madam," replied the visitor, with the overpolite manner of the underbred, "to ask your favor toward a very deserving institution."

"Oh, I'm very sorry!" interposed Blanche stiffly. "I make it a rule not to give——"

"Pardon me, madam—your name was mentioned to me by a gentleman—a friend of yours—who has been kind enough to give me a donation," said the "person," who spoke with a rather cockneyfied accent—"Mr. Esdaile, madam, of Leigh's Hollow."

"I know him very well," said Blanche, relaxing. "What is the institution you represent?"

"A very useful society for befriending first offenders," replied the visitor. "I am collecting on its behalf. We endeavor to prevent these unfortunate young persons from relapsing further into crime. The existing society does not meet all needs. Mr. Esdaile mentioned another of his friends to me—Lord Dampier."

"And a friend of mine too," said Mrs. Gifford, smiling.

Of course the man might be an impostor; but, if he were not, and Lord Dampier and Derek Esdaile had patronized him, she had better not be behindhand. A half sovereign was well spent in this way.

The stranger proceeded smoothly—

"His lordship highly approved of the undertaking. It is most gratifying to have the support of the nobility."

"I'm sure I shall be very pleased to add my mite," said Blanche, drawing out her purse. "I have many expenses, and I can't afford much." She handed a half sovereign to the collector, who bowed several times and was profuse in his thanks. "But I shouldn't imagine," she added with an affected laugh, "that Mr. Esdaile knew much or cared much about first offenders. He is rather young to be a philanthropist."

"Fortunate for him, madam, that he begins young," said the visitor, moving towards the door. He used a stick and shuffled rather than walked. "I wish you good morning, madam. Your kind gift will bestow many blessings."

As he bowed himself out, Blanche laughed.

"I'm sure I don't care about the blessings," she said, "and I think it is very likely the man is a fraud; but it will give me an opportunity of writing to Esdaile to ask him about the matter—and Lord Dampier also. He and her ladyship have rather dropped me lately. If there is no truth in the first offenders, these two gentlemen have simply been taken in.

"Perhaps I can come across the Dampiers. I wish I had their countenance, as I used to. Things look bad, and those fools are all at me. I've succeeded hundreds of times; I fail once, and there's no end to the sneers and the hounding. It's the usual way, of course. Ah, well, I hate failure; but I've had my revenge!"

She sat down to write to Esdaile, who at that moment was on his way home after an afternoon's ride towards Willesden. These long country rides were his sole relaxation, and, in fact, a necessity, if he was to keep up at all.

He did his best to tire himself out, and so get a chance of a night's rest. That was what he had done to-day, and he rode slowly with slack bridle as he left the country behind and came near the bustling streets. It was dark when he reached home. Harris opened the door to him.

"Varcoe is in your study, sir," he said; "he has been here some time."

"I'll go to him at once," said Esdaile, gave some directions to the groom about the horse, which was a great favorite, and went into the study.

As Varcoe rose Esdaile noticed that there was a marked change in his appearance. The man looked bright and alert; he had lost his depressed air, and he was dressed more smartly than usual.

Esdaile, on the contrary, looked weary, and his pleasure at seeing Varcoe was of a very subdued kind. He shook hands and sat down.

"I'm sorry you've been waiting," he said. "Have they taken care of you?"

"Thank you, sir—yes. I hope you haven't been anxious at my not turning up for these two days?"

"Oh, no! I am always sure you are doing something. I saw Hall this morning"—a little dejectedly.

"Had he got hold of anything, sir?"

"No—nothing. He asked how you were getting on. I only told him I hadn't seen you. If he knew you were after the 'Invincibles' he might take some steps that would clash with yours."

Varcoe smiled approvingly.

"Just now, sir, I don't want any clash," he said. "I should like to ask you a few questions about Mrs. Gifford.

"Mrs. Gifford!" Esdaile, who had looked up quickly at the man's first words, uttered the name in a tone of disappointment. "I thought you had given up that idea."

"'Tisn't anything to do with that. Do you know much about her habits—the people she knew? Lord Dampier was one—yes," said Varcoe, in a decided tone; "and there was a Mrs. Davenant, wasn't there, sir?"

"Yes. What has Mrs. Gifford to do with it?"

"I'll tell you directly, sir. She went out a lot, didn't she—parties and all that?"

"A good deal. She knew those people you mention."

"Intimately? Sometimes you knew people to go to the house, and sometimes only to notice them in the street—don't you, sir?"

"Exactly. But she knew the Davenants very well; the Dampiers I'm not so sure of. She used to dine there—not very often."

"That's it!" Varcoe muttered. Then aloud, while Esdaile looked puzzled and interested, he inquired, "Anything odd about her ways, sir?"

"I don't think so. Let me see—no"—slowly, as if he tried to recollect, failed, and yet was not satisfied.

"I think there must have been; try and remember," said Varcoe earnestly. "Mrs. Esdaile would have noticed and told you."

"What do you want to get at?" asked Esdaile, under his breath.

"I've nearly got it, sir! Mrs. Esdaile went out with her—didn't she?—to balls and so on—that's to say, not always? Did she ever say anything to you about it?"

"One day," replied Esdaile, in a low tone, "I remember I asked Teresa how she liked living there, and I remarked that Mrs. Gifford didn't seem to be keeping her promise to take her about. I was vexed; and Teresa—I suppose she wanted to soften me—said she couldn't afford the dress to go out a great deal."

"Yes, sir. Was that all?" persisted Varcoe, leaning forward eagerly.

"No—not quite. She said she couldn't keep such late hours as Mrs. Gifford did——"

"How late?" interrupted Varcoe. He seemed to be trying to curb his excitement, and self-control was not his strong point.

Esdaile succeeded better: it was only by the glitter of his eyes that any one could have guessed at his agitation.

"She told me she heard the carriage return in the small hours," he replied—"that is, sometimes."

"Yes—just so," Varcoe muttered.

"Why?" inquired Derek. Instinctively he rose as Varcoe walked half-way across the room. "What do you mean? What have you heard?"

Varcoe swung round and looked at his companion.

"I asked those questions, sir," he replied, "to get a kind of clinch to what I've been after. I've found something out. You maybe won't believe you gave me the clue."

"I did? You've found something out?" Esdaile started forward, then stopped again and leaned against the mantleshelf, holding his breath. "But Mrs. Gifford—what has she to do with this? I told you that was folly. Don't waste time on it; and yet—yet——"

"It isn't that, sir," said Varcoe, leaning over the back of a chair and fixing his dark eyes on Esdaile's face. "You thought, and your wife thought, that Mrs. Gifford, when she came home so late, had been to balls and parties and the like—wasn't keeping her word, maybe?"

"Yes—we thought so. Well?"

"She didn't do anything of the sort, sir."

"Where, then—what? I'll believe anything you tell me, Varcoe, only tell me, for Heaven's sake, who is this woman?"

"Why, sir, she has two lives, in a way; you see the one, and I the other. You call her 'Blanche Gifford,' and I call her 'Lottie Linton.'"

"Lottie Linton!" repeated Esdaile hoarsely. "An impostor!"

"One of the 'Invincibles!'"

Esdaile stood motionless, with his hand pressed to his forehead, half dazed. The woman he had met in drawing rooms, holding her own, living in daily companionship with Teresa's stainless girlhood, calling her friend indeed, a guest in the houses of his friends, and almost a guest of his own—this woman a common thief, a burglar, preying on unconscious victims, coming and going unsuspected, often welcomed!

It was horrible—impossible! He recalled the robberies that had startled and puzzled society—the Davenant jewels, the Dampier plate. Was it this woman—smiling, charming—who had stolen these costly treasures?

"It can't be—it's madness!" he gasped. "Don't tell me my darling is in those fiends' hands! Tell me she is dead—anything but that! You can't mean it!"

Varcoe laid his hand gently upon Esdaile's arm, and said—

"She's come to no harm, sir; you don't understand yet. I'd stake my life that's true. You've got hold of it in a way, and yet not enough."

"You say they've got her—this woman is one of them! How can you know—how can I trust her? Varcoe, bear with me! Give me a minute!"

He sank into a chair and covered his face with his hands. Perhaps the way the man stood by him, silent, tender, comprehending, helped him to recover his shattered strength.

"I'm half mad!" he whispered. "No—I don't understand! It's all a mist—a black mist!"

"No, sir," said Varcoe softly; "that's all done with. She's been afraid and wretched, but not a hair of her head has been touched. Lottie's got good in her, sir, though you mayn't believe it, and she seems to have been fond of Mrs. Esdaile. She's every one with the gang, too. There's only three of them, and they daren't gainsay her."

Esdaile started up suddenly.

"Is it true? Is it—a dream? I can't believe—I can't!" he said, pacing up and down the room.

"It's true—I've made sure," persisted Varcoe steadily; and the words seemed to give Esdaile some comfort.

"My love—my love!" he murmured. Then, wringing Varcoe's hand, he said brokenly, "Only Heaven can reward you—I never can!"

CHAPTER XXIV.

ESDAILE'S words, "Only Heaven can reward you—I never can!" kept ringing in Varcoe's ears.

"You'll have to keep near me always," continued Esdaile. "I never could spare you."

"Me, sir?" exclaimed Varcoe, with a quiver in his voice, his face flushing. "You won't want me. Not that you'd forget—I don't mean that."

"You've given me more than life, Varcoe!"

"It's only paying back," said Varcoe almost inaudibly.

"You said I gave you a clue," remarked Esdaile, after a long silence; "I don't see how. I am altogether puzzled. At first this strange story of yours seemed credible; but, now that I can think more clearly, I find it almost impossible to believe it."

"It's strange enough, I know, sir," said Varcoe. "If you remember, I always told you there was something out of the way in this business. When I say you gave me the clue—so you did, that day you had been to see Lady Wyndham——"

"Two days ago?"

"Yes, sir; and you'd met Mrs. Gifford. You began talking about her, and I asked you about her—idly-like at first," said Varcoe, carefully choosing his words so as to save Esdaile's pride. "But, as you told me this and that—she not being a lady, and pushing on your marriage—I seemed to feel there was something queer about that woman.

"When I left, I tried to piece things together. I thought and thought, remembering all you had said about her at Leigh's Hollow too—I couldn't let it alone. And then it all came to me in a flash. It's Dick! I said."

"Dick? You called her Linton," said Esdaile quickly.

"We called her Dick, sir. She always worked as a man—a young man; indeed I've never seen her as anything else; so I didn't know her in her own character at all—shouldn't have been sure of her, anyhow. That's one of the secrets I meant, sir. Of course I'd have told it if I had thought that there was anything in it to do with us."

"I know," said Esdaile quietly. Varcoe glanced at him gratefully, then went on—

"You know the 'Invincibles' kept me off, sir. Well, Dick never liked me. Did I tell you she's Jasper Linton's wife? He's the head of the gang—so-called head."

"Wife!" said Esdaile, his lip curling.

"Yes, sir—no sham! She's been better than he; I dare say you'd see that, because she passed pretty well for a lady—must have! I was the only one ever dared go against her. And I thought at first it was that old dislike of hers stopping my way. Afterwards I fancied they'd been up to something, and they were afraid of me. They knew I'd never done this sort of thing; and why shouldn't I be told the ordinary business when I was supposed to have gone back to my old ways?"

"I did right to choose you," said Esdaile. "Go on!"

"You must know, sir," continued Varcoe, "I had not an idea of this fine lady game of hers until you put it into my head. Once I got the idea, everything fitted in. Of course you see the game, sir?"

"A sort of decoy—getting inside rich people's houses, knowing their habits, the valuables—— By gracious, I've been a blind dupe!" cried Esdaile passionately.

"Not a bit of it, sir!" demurred Varcoe. "How in the world should a gentleman like you guess at it? I shouldn't"—in a lower voice—"if I'd been different. Don't you go to blaming yourself; it's an out-of-the-way thing, I can tell you!"

"But I never liked her—never should have been surprised at anything I heard about her! Why did I let Teresa remain with her for an hour?"

"Perhaps you couldn't help it, sir; and then you couldn't guess at this. Besides, she'd got her eye on those rubies—we all knew of them. And, if Mrs. Esdaile had not gone to live with her, why, she'd have managed some other way. She counted on getting invited to your house—she'd have done the thing different then. She thought, if she helped you, you must keep friends with her."

"I see—I see it all!" said Esdaile. "Those wretched jewels! Yet, after all, may not the legend that belongs to them be true? I have them still, and we begin to see light." He paused and looked upwards, his lips quivering. He seemed to have forgotten Varcoe's presence. "You believed that legend, my darling!" he whispered. "I must believe it too!"

"What made me think the 'Invincibles' were in this," Varcoe resumed, "was those Davenant and Dampier robberies. Very like the robbery at your place, sir; the same kind of quiet way—no trace left behind. Some one who knew the house was in it.

"The same hand was in both, but it was worked in a different way than when I was in the gang. I'd pretty well fixed on them however. It was Mrs. Esdaile's disappearance I couldn't make out. That's clear now. You half take me, sir?"

"You mean," said Esdaile, "that this woman, Mrs. Gifford—Dick—was there, at my place, and my wife perhaps recognized her; and so, to save herself—— But why spare Teresa's life? Would a woman like that think much of murder?"

"I don't know, sir. A woman's a woman and nine times out of ten don't care about spilling blood. And then murder's risky. Besides, if Mrs. Gifford—we'll call her so—had taken to your wife, she'd have a scruple. She'd have done it all in a hurry—no time to think; she'd want to keep her place in society. Look at the pile they've made! But I'm thinking they've gone too far this time," added Varcoe grimly, "and Dick's done for the lot of them!"

"I'll leave no stone unturned to pay back a thousandfold all I owe her and them!" said Esdaile, in a low tone. "I would do it with my own hands if I could; all vengeance short of that seems poor! For every minute Teresa has suffered, I would give them years!" Then, after a pause, he added, "You solve another puzzle—why that reward was never claimed. There is no doubt they gained more by maintaining their secret than——"

"Just so, sir; and, if they'd succeeded in getting the rubies, they'd probably have left the country and sold them abroad—couldn't sell them here. What I don't know yet is how Mrs. Gifford knew about that safe of yours. You never told her?"

"I think I can clear that up. No—I never told her; but I remember Lady Wyndham's telling me that, after our return home, Mrs. Gifford called on her, very probably with the view of getting information.

"I wish now I had been less persistent in repulsing her; it's like setting those wretched baubles against Teresa. But it's no use wishing; and it's easy to see mistakes after the event. I can't ask Lady Wyndham about this visit, Varcoe; she'd break her heart if she thought she was in fault."

"It doesn't matter, sir. I dare say she wouldn't exactly remember, either. I told you I'd made sure about Dick; I've come here from her house."

"You have? You saw her?" exclaimed Esdaile eagerly. "Why didn't you ask me for her address?"

"Didn't like to say a word to you until I was downright certain. She might not have been Lottie Linton. I wanted to hear her voice. I'd known that, though I wouldn't be so sure of her face. Dick wears a beard, you see. I've brought this with me"—he held up a half sovereign. "I've been a collector, sir," he explained

with a smile; "and, while I was about it, I thought I might as well find out if she knew Lord Dampier; so I said he'd given me something, and she fell into the trap. It is as you say, she can't resist big names. I used your name, too, because you said she tried to keep in with you. I made up a society—for first offenders—not for a joke, my word on it; but in case she asked questions I'd know how to answer them."

"You needn't defend yourself to me," observed Esdaile softly.

"I thought you' know what to do with the money," said Varcoe, placing the half sovereign upon the table. "I don't suppose she has any particular right to it. She didn't know me.

"She thought it was Jasper—that's her husband—or one of them. I caught her looking at me when she came in. She shams the lady fine—but she don't look it! I got hold of some of your words, sir, to deceive her with. I managed pretty well. It's her right enough."

Esdaile's sense of humor was touched; even at this moment he could not repress a smile. He pictured the whole scene—the woman so completely deceived by superior resources an daring. No wonder she had never liked Frank Varcoe.

"You're not daunted by difficulties," he said. "I'm not surprised you were no favorite of hers. Besides, a soulless heartless wretch like that—— I'll keep this coin for the present, Varcoe. My great difficulty now is that I must see my friends robbed and be silent. But suppose something worse happens—a murder?"

"Not likely, sir," interposed Varcoe consolingly: "they're much too smart to take life readily. You can't say a word, anyhow; and I'll soon find out where they meet!"

"That place," began Esdaile eagerly.

"Most likely they've got Mrs. Esdaile there, sir."

Esdaile began to pace the room again. How soon would it be? How near was the place? The questions passed his lips hurriedly.

"It wouldn't be far," replied Varcoe. "I suspect Lottie went there those nights when she came home late. We had a place at Kennington, but the police found that out. The gang wouldn't meet often, sir, not unless they'd something on and had to arrange things."

"Then what are you going to do? It may be weeks before they make another attempt."

"I think not, sir. I'm pretty sure they have been up to nothing just lately. They'd keep a bit quiet till they thought the hue and cry was over; but they must commence soon—to live, and to keep Lottie going. You don't want the police to track her, sir?"

"Certainly not! I mean you to carry this through. You're worth a hundred detectives. Besides, she would know them, and become suspicious. That day I saw her she asked questions about them—how they were succeeding; but I gave no definite answer. I like to keep things to myself."

"It's very good of you to leave it to me, sir," said Varcoe gratefully. "My idea is not to track her, she'd go in a carriage—but one of the others, and find out first what they're up to."

"Can you, if they hold aloof?"

"Oh, yes: I'll tell by lots of little things! Has she her own coachman, sir? Have you seen him?"

"Once or twice. Ah, I wonder——" Esdaile told Varcoe of that night when Mrs. Gifford had left Teresa at the door of the Opera house, apparently to look after the carriage, when a thief had been almost caught by the police.

"That was Jem Dawson, sir," said Varcoe, his eyes sparkling. "I expect she was anxious. I miss the third 'Invincible,' and I can't help thinking that he drives her carriage; he was a gentleman's coachman."

"What a network you are unravelling!" exclaimed Esdaile. "Thank Heaven that you and I met again. Where are you going?" he inquired, as Varcoe rose from his chair. "Do you mean to begin at once?"

"Yes, sir."

"Is there nothing I can do? To rest here inactive, waiting, is more than I can bear."

"It's hard, I know," replied Varcoe; but you couldn't help me, sir—unless it is to keep Mrs. Gifford off the clue. Can you let me have some more money? I spent what I had on that collector's dress."

Esdaile went to a desk, where he always kept a good sum of money in gold, as Varcoe might need a considerable sum at any moment. He was pouring the coins into the man's hand, but Varcoe gently stopped him.

"This'll do, sir, thank you," he said. "I'll be off now."

"But come to me as soon as you can, and tell me what you've done," replied Esdaile earnestly. "Never mind how late—I shall be up, and will let you in. It's worse now than when I had so little hope. It seems so near—it maddens one! Yet it's a poor return for all your unwearying service to be so impatient. What am I to say to you, Varcoe?" He had taken the man's hand, and Varcoe smiled and shook his head.

"I suppose," he said, as if he were half ashamed, "I oughtn't to think, as I do sometimes, that I'm glad I've been a burglar too?"

"Oh, I understand!" said Esdaile huskily. "It's all for me! Now go! I don't want to fail. Heaven keep you!"

He turned away quickly, and Varcoe went out of the room, glancing back as he closed the door. Esdaile was standing where he had uttered that abrupt "Goodbye;" but, when he felt that he was alone, when the tension was relaxed, he sank down upon his knees by the table. Oh, to annihilate time—to sweep away all obstacles between myself and Teresa!

"Teresita!" he whispered, trying to assuage his agony with the charm of that loved name. "Heaven give me patience, and tell her I am coming!"

CHAPTER XXV.

THERE was no further news that night, and Varcoe did not remain in the house for more than ten minutes on his second visit.

The next morning Esdaile received a charming little note from Blanche Gifford. He was inclined to fling it into the fire unread, but restrained that impulse and opened the envelope.

His lips parted in a bitter smile as he read between the lines. Blanche recounted the visit of a person using Esdaile's name—she would be so glad to know if the man was or was not an impostor.

"Which means," thought Esdaile, "that she wants to make a rapprochement. And I must parley with a wretched traitress like this—assume courtesy and write lies! Well, no matter; there is nothing I would not do for my darling!"

It was however a severe trial to write smooth words to this woman. The ordinary forms of polite correspondence were a mockery in writing to a criminal who was playing the part of a lady of society; and Esdaile was proud, and felt the sting as some men would not have done. But it was something borne for Teresa's dear sake.

He answered the letter with admirable tact—not warmly enough to give Mrs. Gifford any opening, but not so coolly as to cause her vexation.

He told her that he was afraid the man must have been an impostor, and by gentle implication dissuaded her from making any attempt to discover him.

In his own mind he was pretty sure she would make no such attempt—for the less she saw of the police the better.

It was most likely she would have written also to Lord Dampier, who had no reason to say anything but the truth; therefore Esdaile was bound to maintain the theory of imposture.

He almost shuddered when he had finished the note, feeling as if he were playing the part of traitor himself.

It was a relief to go round to the livery stable where he kept his horse, and—as he and Varcoe had agreed late last night order a carriage and pair of horses to be kept always ready for him at a moment's notice.

Varcoe moved cautiously, always elated and hopeful and supremely confident of his own powers. His conviction that the "Invincibles" had some fresh schemes on hand was strengthened by seeing Blanche Gifford's carriage driven up to the door of her house in the small hours.

It was too dark to see if his old mate Mat was the coachman; but Varcoe stole from his hiding-place very well satisfied. He passed Hall on his way home; each man knew the other, though both were partially disguised; but they did not exchange greetings.

"What on earth is the fellow up to?" the detective mused. "I don't half trust him; he's no quicker in this matter than we are, though Mr. Esdaile won't hear a word against him. Well, set a thief to catch a thief; but, as to Varcoe, he may be only feathering his nest."

Varcoe smiled as he passed the detective. Over and above his gladness at having so far succeeded in his task, there was a certain amount of elation at eclipsing this particular member of "the force."

Varcoe however felt the strain of this suspense between certainty and uncertainty; while Esdaile scarcely knew how he lived from day to day. He had little rest by day or night, feeling that he must be always ready for a sudden call. Yet, even when Varcoe had discovered the rendezvous, that did not by any means imply success.

Teresa might be placed elsewhere; or a horrible thought that haunted Esdaile persistently—the terrors of her position might have been too much for her, and he would only be brought face to face with some awful calamity—hopeless collapse, loss of reason, even death.

Varcoe had to abandon the idea of tracking the "Invincibles," and to cast about for another and quicker mode of action. He at last formed a plan of campaign, and set about carrying it out.

One evening—it was past ten o'clock—Esdaile was, as usual, pacing up and down his room, the only mode of giving some vent to his restlessness, when he paused suddenly.

He had heard Varcoe's swift light footstep upon the stairs. He stood motionless as the door opened and Varcoe entered. There was an expression on the man's face that rendered any words superfluous.

"Ready, sir?" inquired Varcoe; and Esdaile turned at once to the locked drawer where he had for days kept his revolvers in readiness.

Both men were perfectly calm—Varcoe from the habit and training, Esdaile from the temperament that always rises to the necessities of a crisis. "I've found the place, sir," he said, in a steady tone. "I think she's there; but I'm not sure; we'll have to chance it. I've only just found it out."

"Where?" was all Esdaile could say, as he stepped aside and rang the bell.

"In a lane near Hampstead, sir. Won't take us long; but we must be sharp. I rather fancy they'll be there later, but I'm not sure."

Esdaile set his teeth; and Varcoe answered the unspoken thought.

"Yes, sir; but we'd best avoid them. They'd be three to two and her to look after. Here's Mr. Harris, sir."

Esdaile closed the drawer, and turned with the revolvers in his hand. Harris, looking from his master to Varcoe, understood, and his face lighted up; but he said not a word.

"Send Wilson to the stable for the carriage," said Esdaile; "and get ready yourself. Now, Varcoe"—as Harris left the room—"have you got a revolver?"

"Yes, sir."

"Better have another." He handed the man a dainty little weapon, and went to the writing-table. "I'm going to send Wilson to Scotland Yard," he said; "the men can follow us. Could you get out of Linton the way to this place?"

"No, sir—only the name. That's why I think she's there; he's so cautious. It's in Swinburne Lane—that's all I know—an old house, with fields behind."

"A map, then!" exclaimed Esdaile, going to a drawer and taking out an ordnance map. He soon found the land, and together the two men traced the quickest route.

"There'd be no other house near," said Varcoe, while Esdaile sat down to write his note. "I came in a hansom, sir, and it's waiting, so Wilson can have it."

"That's right." He finished the note as the carriage rattled up to the door.

"Let me have the map, sir," said Varcoe. "I'll go on the box so as to show Mr. Harris the way. I've got everything else—tools and all."

At this moment Wilson came in, and Esdaile handed him the note.

"Take the hansom at the door," he said, "and tell the man to drive for his life. Give him what he likes to ask for. Here's money."

The man went off, and Esdaile took up his revolver, put on a felt hat, and turned to Varcoe.

"Come," he said.

They went out together and found Harris, who was an expert driver, already on the box-seat. Varcoe opened the door of the carriage, and, after Esdaile had stepped in, climbed up beside Harris as the horses dashed off.

Esdaile sat motionless, looking out of the open window with steadfast eyes, mechanically taking note of the roads along which the carriage passed.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Bric-a-Brac.

COAL.—The first record that we have of coal is about three hundred years before the Christian era. Coal was used as fuel in England as early as 852; and in 1234 the first charter to dig for it was granted by Henry III. to the inhabitants of Newcastle-on-Tyne.

JAPANESE SWORDS.—The test of excellence applied to Japanese swords years ago was very rigid. It was to suspend the blade horizontally, edge upward, under a tree, and a good weapon was supposed to cut in twain any leaf that fell upon it.

RENTING.—They have a novel way in Italy of advertising vacant apartments. In place of the placard inscribed "Rooms To Let, or To be Let," which adorns our windows, a white cloth, about the size of a napkin, flutters from the casement, notifying the passer by that the apartments can be rented.

IN CHINA.—The Chinese New Year begins on January 25th the opening of the year being a movable feast in the Chinese calendar. Like our own leap year, every third year in China is longer than its two predecessors; but the Chinese add a whole month, instead of an extra day. Thus this year includes thirteen months, a second May being provided.

NOTHING TO DIE.—There is at least one country in the world where it costs nothing to die. In some of the cantons of Switzerland all the dead, rich as well as poor, are buried at the public expense. Coffins and all other necessary articles are furnished on application to certain undertakers designated by the government. Everything connected with the interment is absolutely gratuitous, including the grave and the religious service. All classes avail themselves freely of the law.

BOER.—The "Fortnightly Review" is authority for the statement that there "is only one scientific definition for the term Boer—it signifies a European by descent, whose vernacular is the Taal, and who uses familiarly no literary European language. It does not denote race, or necessity; the Boer may be French, Dutch, German or of any other blood—neither does it of any necessity denote occupation; the Boer is often a farmer and stock-owner, but he may also be a hunter, trader or of any other occupation."

THE GOAT.—In Switzerland and other mountainous countries the goat leads long strings of animals daily to and from the mountains, but it is in South Africa that it is regularly kept and employed as a leader of sheep. Should a blinding storm of rain or hail drive the silly sheep before it, or cause them to huddle together in a corner, so as to suffocate each other, the trained goat will wake them up and, by a method best known to himself, will induce them to follow him to a place of safety.

THE LEMON.—The lemon is a tree which has by many botanists been regarded as a variety of the citron, and, like it, a native of the North of India. It is a knotty wooded tree, about eight feet in height, with rough bark. Its leaves are pale green, ovate or oblong in shape, with a winged stalk. The fruit is oblong, wrinkled or furrowed, sometimes smooth, and of a pale yellow color, with generally concave oil-cysts in the rind. In the common variety the juice of the pulp are much more acid than those of the orange, and abound in citric acid. This variety is very extensively cultivated in tropical and sub-tropical climates.

A SORBET SELLER.—Street life in Cairo is very attractive to the stranger. Even business seeks the open air rather than the close and stuffy shop. Guides, sais-drivers, messengers, are ever on the look-out for strangers. Other industries are more cosmopolitan; the sellers of fruit, of sugar-cane, of water, of sorbet, abound. Sorbet, once the beverage of the rich exclusively, is now offered for a trifle to the moving world on the thoroughfare. Sorbet has been within the reach of all; but it is rather an orange, lemon, or pomegranate syrup, than the cool sorbet of other days. The dealer stalks the street, calm, placid, like all Orientals. His garb is wretched, his turban of a color not to be decided, his slippers cling to his feet by some fascination. A porous earthern jar and a goblet not over clean, constitute the seller's outfit. At a sign he comes up, and with proverbial gravity pours out a glass, waits in all patience for the purchaser to empty it, receives the accustomed coin, and goes on to meet another customer. He may pass ten fountains, but the goblet is never rinsed.

HOPE.

BY S. L. B.

Young hope, in rainbow hues arrayed,
Ran laughingly up to me,
And in his crystal glass displayed
My golden yet to-be.

I stretched my arms the prize to clasp,
But ah! 'twas all in vain,
For when I thought it in my grasp
He snatched it back again.

With fancies fair he lured me still
Through all the livelong day;
Then, when he teased me to his fill,
The rogue, he ran away.

He vanished with a parting jeer,
And nevermore was seen;
He left me broken hearted here
To mourn the might-have-been.

MARRED BY FATE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "GLORY'S LOVERS," "AN ARCH-IMPOSTOR," "HUSHED UP!" "A LOVER FROM OVER THE SEA," ETC."

[Up to date "Marred by Fate" is in substance as follows: Bruce Ravenhurst, the son of the Earl of Clansmere, falls in love with Jess Newton, the daughter of a rich English colonist, who had just arrived from Africa and engaged an estate near the young nobleman's home. Bruce has been rather wild and had formed an association with a woman known as Deborah. He tries to break this alliance but the woman swears he shall marry no one but her. Henry Glave, a wealthy, but low-bred schemer, helps her in this determination. Between them they arrange a plan wherein Glave, who pretends to be a friend of Ravenhurst's, is to disguise himself as the latter and make a pretense of marrying Deborah, the idea being to come ultimately into the Clansmere property. Bruce enters in a secret marriage with Jess, not telling his father of it and she not mentioning it to hers. Glave has, by means of dress, whiskers, wigs and other circumstances, already succeeded in passing himself off before some of the minor characters of the story as Ravenhurst. Bruce the day after the wedding has prepared to go to Africa as a soldier, with a view of reforming, and business affairs suddenly call Jess' father there. Jess is to remain during his absence in the care of Lady Marvelle, Bruce's aunt. Frank Forde is a lover of Jess', and Lord Desmond a friend of Bruce's who thinks he has met Bruce at a certain time and place, but the person he saw was really Glave so perfect was the disguise. From this point we are carried further by the succeeding chapters.]

CHAPTER XXVI.—(CONTINUED.)

INDEED, there was no time for tears or lamentation; for, notwithstanding that Mr. Newton had already commenced his preparations—the floor was littered with boxes and clothes—there was still much to do.

"I want you to come and see me off, Jess," he said. "I have been round to Lady Marvelle, and she has kindly offered to go down to Southampton to-morrow with us, and will bring you back. Now, dear, if you will hand me those things, I can go on talking while we are packing."

Jess lay awake the whole of the night. To lose father and newly-gotten husband in one day was a heavy enough sorrow to ward off sleep, and all through the watches of the night her love for the two men kept her heart on the rack.

And, also, conscience tortured her with the deception and secrecy in the charming way conscience has, so that Jess' spirit was finely tried that night.

They met Lady Marvelle at the station next morning, and traveled to Southampton. All the way the thought that she might see Bruce once again before he left, was giving Jess mingled pain and joy; and, as they made their way to the vessel, her face grew white and anxious. Mr. Newton ascribed her agitation and emotion to her grief at parting with him, and strove to cheer her.

"I may not be away many months; it is quite possible that I may send for you. You will be happy, dear, after—after you have got over the parting. You must write to me very often. God knows how I shall long for your letters, and treasure every word, and—"

He stopped abruptly, for there, leaning against the bulwarks of the deck, was Lord Ravenhurst. Jess also saw him at the same moment, and her heart leaped, and then seemed to stand still.

Lady Marvelle uttered a cry.

"Oh, there is Bruce!" she said.

Bruce had had his head turned from them; but, at the sound of his name, he swung round and saw them—that is to say, he saw Jess—for, of course, he had not eyes for anyone else.

The blood flew to his face, and then left it white, and he stood gripping the hand-rail of the landing stage a moment, as if he could not move. Then he raised his hat and came forward.

Mr. Newton returned the salutation coldly.

"We are to be fellow travelers, I presume, Lord Ravenhurst," he said.

Bruce bowed.

"Yes," he said. "Well, aunt, have you come to see me off?"

He spoke with an affectation of lightness. Indeed, he did not know what to say, what manner to adopt; for there stood Jess, with downcast face and tremulous lips.

"Come and see my cabin, Jess," said Mr. Newton, and he drew her away. She glanced over her shoulder at Bruce as she went, and her heart was in her eyes.

"Oh, this is so strange, Bruce!" said Lady Marvelle, as she looked after Jess. "That you and her father should be on the same ship! And she is coming to me while he is away; did you know that, dear?"

"It is a capital arrangement for both of you, I should say," he remarked, evading her question.

"Yes; I am so glad to have her; she is so lovable. But, Bruce, I want to talk of yourself, and your—your future. You are going all this way—oh, Bruce, you will be careful for—for my sake, your father's Bruce!"

"Yes, for—for everybody's," he said. "Don't be afraid, aunt, I'm all right now." He kept glancing wistfully at the cabin stairs, down which Jess had disappeared.

"And—and, Bruce—you have quite given up all thought of Miss Newton?" she said, anxiously.

Bruce smiled grimly.

"I have quite given up all thought of—Miss Newton; yes," he said.

"I—I am glad! Though if it could have been—but it could not. Her father would never have consented."

"You will take care of her?" he broke in; then, seeing Lady Marvelle start, and look at him with surprise, he changed his tone. "I mean— There's the bell! You will not get off in time—if she—if you don't look sharp. Good-bye, aunt! Yes, yes, I'll be careful; and I'll write; don't you think you'd better give her a call?"

At this moment Jess and her father came on deck.

"I may say good-bye to him, father?" she whispered.

"Certainly, certainly," he said, "and I hope it will, indeed, be good-bye."

She glanced at him reproachfully, and choked back a sob, as she went up to Bruce.

"Good-bye, Lord Ravenhurst," she said, with downcast eyes. Then she lifted them for a moment, as Lady Marvelle had turned her head away, and her lips formed "Bruce!"

"Good bye, Miss Newton," he said, and he held her hand. Then Mr. Newton came up, Bruce turned away, and Jess was led, blinded with tears, along the gangway, from the vessel.

In the midst of the confusion, she saw her father and Bruce standing unconsciously side by side.

As the vessel moved slowly from its moorings, Mr. Newton waved his hand, and Bruce waved his. Both men were pale to the lips. The tears were in Lady Marvelle's eyes as she drew Jess away.

"Don't cry, dear! He will be back almost before you have missed him; he told me that it was very likely he would send for you if he were away long. You would not be afraid to go, dear?"

"Afraid, if Bruce sent for me!" said Jess. Then the color flew to her face, and she turned her head away.

"My poor child, I understand," said Lady Marvelle, pityingly. "You can scarcely know what you are saying! It is hard to part with one's father!"

"And husband, too!" cried Jess' heart.

Jess cried her heart out that night; but, towards morning, she dried her tears. She was a soldier's wife; and soldiers' wives ought not to cry—too much. A soldier's wife.

The thought thrilled her with pride and joy, and her heart throbbed under the wedding ring, which, suspended by a silken cord, lay hidden in her bosom.

Lady Marvelle was kindness itself, and treated Jess as if she were in very truth, her daughter.

For a day or two she let her remain quiet and very much to herself, for Lady Marvelle knew that solitude and quiet are sorely needed by an aching heart; then she took Jess out, and introduced her to that inner circle, that seventh heaven of society, of which Lady Marvelle was a distinguished member.

And that creme de la creme of our Upper Ten welcomed the girl, with the grave blue eyes and black hair, and made much of her; for Jess had that valuable knack, as unconscious as it is valuable, of prepossessing everyone in her favor.

Before a week had passed, "pretty Miss Newton" was as popular in the exclusive London set as she had been in rural Ravenhurst.

The women petted her because she was so young, and had "such a sad little look," in her eyes; and the men gathered round her, and paid court to her, after the manner of their kind.

Wherever she went, she attracted attention, and won hearts. Men crowded round Lady Marvelle's box at the theatre, hovered about her—when Jess was near her—at dances, and hung upon the rails of the Park to get a bow or a smile from Jess as she rode or drove by.

Lady Marvelle was delighted with the girl's success, and made a good deal of fuss over her. Every woman is at heart a match-maker, and Lady Marvelle began to dream of a high and grand match for her ward, as she called her.

There were several men who paid Jess marked attention—men of wealth and rank, and, what was of equal importance in the old lady's opinion, irreproachable character.

There was a certain marquis for one, Lord Levondale, who was almost Jess' shadow; for another, there was Sir Robert Raile, a Cabinet Minister, and owner of one of the largest estates in England, and, for the rest, two young noblemen, whose names don't matter, who were evidently eager and anxious to propose for Miss Newton's hand.

But, somehow or other, Jess managed to keep them at arm's length. She was gracious and sweet—too sweet, they thought, with a sigh!—to them all; but she encouraged no one of them, and seemed clad in an armor of impenetrable steel—steel covered with velvet, but quite love-proof.

Lady Marvelle did not know whether to be proud or disappointed. Of course, Jess was still in love with Bruce, and Lady Marvelle liked her for that; but, well, Jess could not marry Bruce, and that being so, she must marry someone else; in fact, Lady Marvelle deemed it her duty to "settle" her ward satisfactorily; and, when Lord Levondale came to her, and asked her permission to address Jess, she encouraged him, while advising him to have patience.

She gave the same advice to Sir Robert Raile; and, by way of sounding Jess, talked a great deal of these eligible suitors.

"Now, which do you like best, dear?" she said, astutely.

"Neither, or both," replied Jess, with one of her sunny smiles.

"But, my dear," urged the old lady, gently, "they are so different—though both are excellent young men."

"Are they different?" said Jess, rather listlessly. "They seem alike to me; they are both beautifully dressed—why do men all dress alike? What would they say if we women wore the same frocks and bonnets? And they say the same things."

"I am sure they are pleasant, agreeable things, my dear."

Jess laughed indifferently.

"Oh, yes, they say the nicest things imaginable; if one could only believe them true."

"My dear, depend upon it, both Lord Levondale and Sir Robert mean what they say. I have reason for feeling sure of that. I don't want to worry you, but—but, well, the youngest girl knows when she is being made love to. Lord Levondale and Sir Robert are both waiting for an opportunity to ask you to marry them."

The blood rushed to Jess' face, then fled from it, and she looked at the kindly, anxious face of her unconscious tormentor, with something like terror.

"I don't want to marry either of them," she said a little breathlessly. "I shall never marry, Lady Marvelle!"

Lady Marvelle smiled, and shook her head.

"Never is a very—very long time, my dear," she said.

"It is," said Jess, in a low voice; and Lady Marvelle wisely said no more for the present.

That evening they attended a fashionable reception, at which Lord Levondale and Sir Robert were present, and if they had any intention of proposing that night, their intention was nipped in the bud by Jess' frosty manner.

It was ice—smooth, shining, but ice itself. She was surrounded as usual, and every now and then someone was brought up to be introduced to the pretty Miss Newton.

Jess was very absent-minded and distrait that evening, and the far away look in her eyes, which the women declared was one of the causes of the mischief she wrought, was more marked than usual.

She was thinking of Bruce—and her father—and counting the days that must still elapse before it would be of any use her calling at a certain stationer's in South Audley street to whose care Bruce had arranged to send his letters, and scarcely bestowed any attention upon her crowd of admirers.

But presently she found a gentleman standing before her, with his head bent with the conventional bow, and something in his face roused her attention and interest.

He was tall and thin, with a pale face, and light, almost colorless eyes; and, as he bowed and smiled, his lips were twisted in a peculiar fashion.

Jess vouchsafed him a slight inclination of the head, he murmured some commonplace as he stood beside her, then moved away, as if he understood and accepted the fact that she was not in the humor for talk.

When he was out of hearing, Jess turned to Lady Marvelle, and asked—

"Who was that gentleman who was just introduced to me?"

"Which, my dear? There are so many!" said the old lady, pulling up her gold eyeglasses, and looking round, with her placid smile.

"The gentleman who is talking to the German Prince," said Jess. "There!" and she adroitly indicated him with a wave of her fan.

Lady Marvelle saw him after a minute or two.

"His name is Blave or Glave—yes, that is it, Glave," she said.

"Who is he?" Jess asked. Something about the face, the expression of the eyes, the twist of the lips, affected her strangely.

Lady Marvelle shrugged her shoulders slightly.

"That's a difficult question to answer, dear," she replied. "I don't think anyone could tell you. One meets him everywhere; but that is all one knows. He is very clever and agreeable, I believe. He is a friend of Bruce's, by-the-way."

Jess put her hand over the spot where the wedding ring nestled.

"Oh, surely not!" she murmured inaudibly and with an irrepressible shudder, for which she would have found it hard to account.

That man with the sinister face, Bruce's friend! It seemed impossible, she thought, as she watched, with a kind of fascination, Mr. Glave making his way about the room.

CHAPTER XXVII.

AFTER the night of his introduction to her, Jess met Mr. Henry Glave frequently. Indeed, she saw him wherever she went; and Mr. Glave contrived to be near her on every possible occasion, notwithstanding that Jess treated him with a coldness and reserve which would have given most men their conge.

Her dislike, almost dread, of the man grew, instead of diminishing; but it was very difficult, if not impossible, to cut him, for Mr. Glave's manner towards her was the perfection of respectful attention.

He never seemed to obtrude himself, and yet Jess found him continually at her elbow, for he had ingratiated himself into Lady Marvelle's good graces, and made himself useful in getting theatre and concert tickets, and in the hundred other little ways in which a gentleman can be of service to an old lady. Lady Marvelle almost—but not quite—liked him, and lectured Jess upon her dislike of him.

"He is certainly one of the best-mannered men I know; and he is the superlative of good nature; you must admit that, Jess, dear," she said laughingly, one afternoon after Mr. Glave had left the room.

Jess' brows came straight, and she looked thoughtfully at the fire.

"I will admit that and more, dear, if you like," she said. "But, all the same, I cannot bring myself to like Mr. Glave."

"Now, I wonder why?" asked Lady Marvelle. "You are generally so ready to make any new friends, and to see the best side of everyone. It is not like you to be prejudiced."

"Perhaps I am prejudiced," said Jess. "I can't explain why I dislike Mr. Glave; I only know that whenever I see him I

feel, well, as one feels upon meeting a black beetle," and she laughed.

"There is something in his face which rouses my suspicions. Oh! don't ask what kind of suspicions, I couldn't tell you. And as to his manner, well it is perfect, as you say; but it always seems to me artificial, and as if he were acting."

Lady Marvelle smiled at her.

"You are hard to please, Jess," she said, affectionately. "There are three men devoted to you, Lord Levondale, Sir Robert, and now Mr. Glave, and not one of them finds favor in your sight."

The blood rose to Jess' face, and an expression of pain came into her eyes.

"Why should it be necessary for any of them to please me?" she said. "What I said the other day, that I should never marry, was quite true. If you would only tell them so!"

Lady Marvelle shook her head and laughed.

"You will have to do that; I haven't the heart, Jess."

Jess' lips became compressed. "I will tell them—when they ask me," she said.

It almost drove her mad to be courted and wooed—she, who was already wedded, and the wife of a man she loved better than life itself.

Her love for Bruce had increased since their marriage, and his absence had made her heart grow fonder; there was scarcely a moment of the day she did not think of him, and at night she lay awake longing for him; only the fact that he was hers, her very own, enabled her to keep up her courage and her spirits; that thought and the prospect of a letter from him.

On the day on which she could venture to expect one, she called at the stationer's in South Audley street, and, to her unspeakable joy, a thin foreign envelope was handed to her. It was, of course, addressed to Miss Newton, and Jess' face burnt as she read it and thrust it in her pocket.

As she entered the house, a servant handed her a similar looking letter from her father; but when Jess had locked the door of her room she opened Bruce's first. Is it not written that one shall leave father and mother, and cleave to one's husband?

It was a long letter, but Jess, for a moment or two, could not get further than the first line, "My dear wife." His dear wife! Her eyes swam with tears, and her heart, as she pressed the line to her lips.

It was long, it was rambling, and it was badly spelt, for Bruce's education had, like that of many public schoolboys, been a glorious farce. He could ride straight, but he came a cropper over most of the long words in the English language.

"I have got so much to tell you, dearest, that I don't know where to begin; and then all the time I want to be writing 'I love you, Jess; I love you my wife! and that wouldn't be any news, would it?

"We had a splendid passage out, and I should have had a high old time of it if I hadn't been perpetually longing for you. There's plenty of card playing going on, but 'I've sworn off,' as Rip Van Winkle says, and I sit on deck most of the time and wonder where you are, what you are doing, and what dress you are wearing, and wishing I were one of the servants who wait on you, or the policeman on your beat, that I might get a sight of you now and again; and when I think of the fellows who are privileged to be near you, and hang about you with your fan and gloves and bouquet, I get mad, and stamp up and down, and swear softly, and the first mate—a decent fellow—thinks I am mad.

"I want to tell you about your father. When I saw him come on board, you might have knocked me down with a feather. Fancy his sailing by the same ship. Well, at first, he was as cold as ice, and kept me at arm's length, frowning at me as you know how he can frown; but I waited my time, and after awhile he spoke to me.

"Of course, they put us next each other at the table—they always manage those matters awkwardly—and I passed him the pepper and salt, and was attentive, and all that—as a fellow ought to be to his father-in-law, don't you know—and all the time I wondered what he would say or do if he knew—well, what we know— that I was really his son-in-law.

"After a bit, he came round, that is to say, we exchanged a few words, and then we got on to talk. I was mortally afraid of his mentioning you, for I knew if he did I should color up like a schoolboy. And one day he did.

"You know his straightforward, downright way—I like him for that, Jess; it reminds me of you. Well, we had been sitting beside each other on the deck one day, for nearly a quarter of an hour, without speaking; then he said, quite suddenly—

"'Lord Ravenhurst, chance has thrown us together, and may still decree that we should be companions, for our destination is the same; I am a straightforward man, and detest concealment and subterfuge.' I said so did I, and then remembered what I was concealing, and got hot about the eyes. He waited a moment, then he went on.

"'I am under the impression that, seeing you are trying your fortunes in a foreign land, you have abandoned your pursuit of my daughter. If I am right—and I trust I am—I shall be glad to receive your assurance to that effect.' I sat silent, and he went on:

"'You know my reasons for objecting to your engagement, and—though I must admit that my opinion of you has improved—that objection still stands. I detest an unequal marriage, Lord Ravenhurst.'

"'Your daughter is the equal of anyone, sir,' I said. 'You forget that she is the intimate friend of—is staying with—my aunt.'

He paused. "You think I was inconsistent in giving my permission to the arrangement," he said. "Perhaps I was. But I yielded to my daughter's evident desire to live with Lady Marvelle. But that is beside the point. If we are to continue our acquaintance, Lord Ravenhurst, I shall need your assurance that you have given up all thought of marrying my daughter."

"This was a poser, dearest, wasn't it? And it flurried me for a moment or two; then—what do you think I said? I said, I can assure you that I have given up all thought of marrying Miss Newton."

Jess started, and looked up from the letter for a moment, then she resumed it.

"It wasn't a lie, Jess, dear. You think; how could I marry Miss Newton, when she was married already?"

Jess blushed from neck to face. "Oh, wicked, wicked!" she murmured, but she kissed the letter again.

"Your father seemed staggered for a moment—as well he might be, remembering that scene in the drawing-room at the Grange—but he held out his hand and said, 'I am glad to hear it, Lord Ravenhurst. That assurance removes the only barrier to our acquaintance. We will not refer to the past—speak of my daughter—again, if you please.'

"I took his hand, and I felt pretty mean, though it wasn't an absolute story, now, was it, Jess? And we shook hands in the most friendly way, and switched off on to another subject.

"We are a great deal together, and he talks a lot about Africa and his business; and I am picking up a great deal of information.

"He must be a wonderful man; and it's a mystery to me how he pulls all the strings of the different things he has got on hand. I feel like a fool beside him. And I like him, Jess. Yes, I like him. I wish to Heaven I was anyone else but Bruce Ravenhurst, that I might say right out to him:

"Look here, I've married your daughter, but I won't claim her till I've your consent. But I can't say that, can I? And sometimes he speaks of you—though he said he wouldn't—and I listen and don't say a word, though I'm longing to chime in and tell him what I think of you.

"The most perfect, sweetest woman possible. "Oh, Jess, if you were only here. For Heaven's sake, don't forget me! I think of you surrounded by heaps of men, good fellows, better than I am, and—ah, well, I know you'll be true to me even in thought, my darling."

Jess' tears brimmed over at this point. The letter went on, but dated now from Cape Town.

"Here we are, and the fun's going to begin. I've got my commission, and I'm off up-country at once. I've got a troop of splendid fellows, they say, and I'm assured there'll be plenty of fighting right off."

Jess trembled, and the thin paper shook in her hand.

"But don't be afraid for me, my dearest; I'll keep a sharp lookout, and remember I've got something to live for. Strange, isn't it? But your father is going my way! He's got a mine in the place where the trouble is, and he is going to look after it. Now I know you'll be nervous about him, and I am going to look after him! Don't you fear! Not a hair on his head shall be hurt while I can protect him.

"Not that he hasn't plenty of pluck—you got yours from him, I can see, and he is as cool as a cucumber. All is confusion here; what with men enrolling, and the stores, and the rest of it, and I haven't time for any more before the mail goes, except to tell you that I think of you, and long for you, and love you better than ever!

"Your husband,
BRUCE."

Her first love letter; and from her husband!

It was some time before she could open her father's. It was as loving, in its way, as Bruce's, and gave her a full account of Mr. Newton's doings. Towards the end of the letter he mentioned Bruce, "Lord Ravenhurst is here, and I am going up country with him.

"I find him much improved, and we are very good friends. I can say this to you without reserve, because Lord Ravenhurst has assured me that he is no longer a suitor for your hand.

"I know that this will cause you grief and disappointment, but, Jess, it is better to face the truth and meet the inevitable. I am still convinced that the marriage would have brought unhappiness to you both; and I am glad that Lord Ravenhurst has abandoned all thought of it. Be brave, my dear child, and forget him."

It was a grave, and yet tender, letter, and it made Jess cry, of course, even while she read Bruce's over again, twice.

Her eyes were red when she had finished reading; but she bathed them and ran downstairs as she heard the hall door close, to meet Lady Marvelle. Perhaps she, too, had heard from Bruce, and would show her the letter.

She ran straight into the drawing-room and found, not Lady Marvelle, but the Earl of Clansmere.

She had not seen him since the night she and her father had dined at the Castle, and the color flew to her face for a moment as she stopped short and held out her hand.

The earl took it in his and held it, and looked half wistfully, half smilingly, at her face, pale again now.

He had taken a great fancy to Jess—one of those likings that spring up in the hearts of childless men for a young and charming girl; and Jess was so very charming.

"Well, my dear," he said, still holding her hand. "You did not expect to find me here? I hope you are not sorry to see me; for I am very glad to see you."

"Why should I be sorry, Lord Clansmere?" said Jess.

"I don't know I'm sure," he said, whimsically, "except that I have the misfortune to be the father of a certain young man." Jess colored, and hung her head. "Never mind! That's all over, isn't it?"

Jess made no response, but her bosom heaved and her lips trembled.

"Well, well, we won't talk about it. Come and sit down beside me. I came in for a cup of tea; my sister is out, I hear, but they told me you were in, and so——"

"Yes, and I have the key of the caddy," said Jess, with that quick, Irish brightness and vivacity which had won the old man's heart. "You shall have your tea, Lord Clansmere."

She rang the bell, and drew up a chair close to the fire.

"Come and sit here," she said, "and you shall see me make the toast. We always do it ourselves, you know. No, you will not be at all in the way."

"You must let me cut the bread," he said, and while he did so he looked at her keenly, and he sighed. It was evident that she was not pining over the broken engagement, for she looked too happy.

"Have you had a letter from your father, my dear," he asked, in a pause of the conversation.

"Yes," said Jess.

"I thought so," he said. "Because I have had a line or two from Bruce; he and your father are together, you know."

Jess put up her hand to shield her face from the fire and the keen eyes bent upon her.

"Yes," she murmured. "Another slice, please."

"Yes. Would you like to see it?" he said, in a delicate casual way. "I know that you and Bruce have cried off, but—well, it's rather an interesting letter, and there's something about your father in it."

He took the letter from his pocket and held it out to her, and Jess took it without looking round, and opened it. He saw that her hand trembled, and said, in the same casual way—

"Don't trouble to read it now; you can send it back to me, or—you can keep it, if you like. You will see that he is going up country—that there will be fighting."

It was cruel of him, and he knew it, but he wanted to see whether she still cared for Bruce. The tears that sprang to her eyes gave her away to him.

"Yes; you can keep the letter, my dear," he said softly. "Of course, I ought to be anxious about him; but to tell you the truth, I am not very alarmed. Bruce has a happy knack of getting out of scrapes, and will turn up safe and sound, some day. Meanwhile—this is the best toast I've ever eaten; I suppose it's the way I cut the bread, eh?—meanwhile, do you think you and I might be friends, my dear?"

Jess surreptitiously drew her hand across her eyes as she poured out his cup of tea.

"I mean your father won't object to that? You see, I don't want to marry you, as Bruce does—or did; and since he has gone I feel a terribly lonely old man. Not that I saw a great deal of him, but a line would always bring him—and he always came when he wanted money, yes, now I think of it, I did see him rather often," he added, with the half cynical, but really gentle smile which robbed his cynicism of its sting.

Jess laughed.

"I think I'll spend this winter in London," he went on. "I'll tell them to get the house in Park Lane ready; that is, if you will promise to enliven an old man's solitude sometimes, my dear?"

It was all said with a smile, but there was something in the eyes—so like Bruce's—that went to Jess' heart.

"Yes, stay in London," she said.

The earl nodded.

"That is good," he said, "and it will still be better if you bring yourself to believe that you have—well, not another father, but, say, a godfather, who may stand in loco parentis while your real father is away."

Jess laid her small hand on his—scarcely larger, and nearly as white.

"Why are you all so good to me?" she said, with a little catch in her voice.

"I give it up; ask me another," he said imitating Bruce's tone and manner delicately.

Lady Marvelle coming in saw them seated cosily before the fire, and talking like old friends, and she regarded them with twinkling eyes.

'Clansmere, I've a letter from Bruce!" she said, as Jess gave her a cup of tea.

"So have I, or I had," he said, naively. "I gave it to Miss Newton."

"Then I may as well give her mine, too," said Lady Marvelle. "Take care of it, my dear, for I want to read it again; and you are sometimes so careless with letters and papers."

"I will take care of it," said Jess, in a low voice.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

ONLY THEIR FANCY.—"It is astonishing to find what queer delusions sometimes take possessions of people," says a certain physician.

"In the course of my practice I have often come across persons who held long conversations with perfectly imaginary individuals.

"I have seen persons manifest the greatest alarm at animals of whose presence and voices near them they assured me they were as positive as of my own, absolutely refusing to believe that the creatures were not really there.

"One young lady, who was frightened by the sudden presentation to her of a white mouse, has been troubled for years by seeing this mouse running about her, upon her clothing, upon anything she is handling, and even upon her food; and, in consequence, she is in a state of constant agitation, though at times she is convinced that the animal is merely imaginary.

"She often washes her hands and clothes because she is sure that the animal has dirtied them, and she cannot divest herself of the belief that it is real.

"I have been sometimes able to convince persons that such fancied figures were not real by asking them to push one eyeball up a little with the finger.

"This makes all real objects in their neighborhood appear double, as anyone can prove to himself, but it does not double the false image.

"The young lady I have just mentioned derived much comfort by the adoption of this simple device."

Love that pines, and whines, and envies, and feels spiteful at every attention not lavished on itself and its own gratification is not love at all, although it goes so often by the name, and is mistaken for it.

TIME'S SHIP.

BY W. M.

Hail honored captain and the crew
Of the ship Time that now have said
To the dead year a last adieu.
Keep a bright look out. Sail ahead!

They dream you make reply and say:
"You're borne afloat life's stream by Time,
A worthy vessel; but she may
Not bear all to a happier clime!

"A course of folly, sloth and ease,
Ignoble pleasure eager craves,
The heart all base that honor flees
Must be tossed on the troubled waves.

"While those in right and virtue's cause,
Their bosom clean and conscience clear,
Blest with content, meet God's applause,
Are sure of joy's eternal year."

A Strange Premonition.

BY I. G.

THE first few times that I felt that strange thrill, and saw that faintly shining appearance of a human face start from the gloom of the dark staircase, I tried to set the whole thing down to a fancy, naturally lively and romantic, stimulated by my musings on the past of the old house which had lately and so unexpectedly become my home.

As briefly as may be, let me give an account of my previous history, and of the circumstances in which the dark, old house in X—— street became my property.

Ten years ago, while I was still in my teens, I lost my mother, my only remaining parent, and was alone in the world.

The little pension she had enjoyed, as widow of an officer killed in action, had been all she had had to live on. Consequently, I had to depend on my own exertions for a living.

I had shown some talent for music, and had been as thoroughly trained as my mother's means would allow. Having taken a certificate at the R. A. M., I had had little difficulty in getting a situation as teacher of music and harmony in one of the two schools.

What with this and some private pupils, I was earning enough to support myself. Such had been my position when my mother's death left me alone in the world. Such it continued for a year or two afterwards.

Then, I made the pleasant discovery that music was not my only, was not even my best talent. I found that I could write. From my quiet little lodging I sent out, trembling with the anxiety and fearfulness of the beginner, stories, articles and verses.

I cast my bread upon the waters; and, in a good many cases, found it, after many days, in the form of printed contributions in magazines and of checks.

I was more fortunate than most who entered on the thorny path of letters; and, without setting our chief river in a blaze, or producing the "Novel of the season," I met with so much encouragement and success, that by-and by I felt justified in dropping music, save as a delight to myself.

I taught no more. My writing did not earn me any very considerable sum, but it brought me about twice what my music had brought, and I was content.

So the years went on as I lived alone in the great crowded city, and my girlhood began to slip from me.

It was one fine morning last September, as I sat at my solitary breakfast, that I picked up that day's newspaper and saw first, in the Agony column, the following advertisement:

"If Alice Brunton, daughter of the late Mrs. George Brunton, widow, who, in the year 18—, lived in S—— Street, W. C., will apply to Messrs. Thompson, Solicitors, No. —, Lincoln's Inn Fields, she will hear of something to her advantage."

When I say that I was then Alice Brunton, that my mother was Mrs. George Brunton, and that in the year 18— our home was a small top-floor in S—— Street, W. C., it will be seen that this advertisement gave me a good deal to think of. I had not thought for very long, however, before light dawned upon me and I exclaimed, for my own sole behoof:

"Why, of course. My half-uncle's left me something."

And yet this was puzzling, too. He had quarreled with my mother, this half-brother of hers, many years her senior, on her marrying a poor man when she might have had a rich one; had quarreled with her so bitterly, and had been so rude and insulting towards her bridegroom, that she had held no communication with him ever after.

She had very rarely mentioned him to me. I knew he had been a surgeon in practice in London, but I knew nothing more of him, and had never imagined that he was even aware of my existence.

Full of these thoughts, I went off to Lincoln's Inn Fields. I was shown into Mr. Thompson's formal office, and from Mr. Thompson's formal and polite self I heard that, unlikely, almost impossible as on further reflection it had appeared, I had been right in exclaiming, "My half-uncle's left me something."

It seemed that my good mother, when the shadow of death was creeping slowly over her; had been much troubled at leaving me alone in the world, dependent on my own exertions.

For my sake she had forced herself to do what she would never have done for her own—write to her long estranged half-brother, evidently commending me to his care.

No notice had been taken of the letter at the time; but now, nearly ten years after, I heard of the fruit it had borne from Mr. Thompson, of Lincoln's Inn Fields, solicitor to the late Mr. Joshua Perrin, F. R. C. S.

He had left me $2000 a year and his house in X—— Street, W. The rest of his money (he was a childless widower with no near relatives) he had willed to the hospital with which for many years he had been connected.

So, from earning a precarious living by music, and afterwards by my pen, I was raised all at once to independence, and to what seemed to me almost affluence.

I went at once to X—— Street to look at my house (how grand I felt as I said it). I found it a tall, dark, narrow-fronted house, joined to similar houses on each side, and standing in a dull, quiet, old street turning off from the north side of Oxford Street.

The house was left to me furnished, and I decided to move in at once, and begin housekeeping, with the help of an old servant who had lived with my mother and me for years, and whom I had kept in sight since it had been necessary to part with her.

I was sure dear old Anna would be only too willing to give up her present situation, and come to me.

And so events proved. In a very short time I was installed at No. 10, X—— Street, with Anna as cook-housekeeper, and a young servant under her.

I meant to have some improvements made in the arrangements of the house. The drawing-room I thought of having decorated and newly-furnished, previously to entertaining in style the few friends I had been able to make.

But in the very first week of my sojourn in my house, while I was busy planning all sorts of pleasant things for the future, I felt that strange thrill, saw that faintly shining, undefined appearance of a human face start from the gloom of the dark old staircase; and, in spite of my self-scoldings and self-reasonings, my pleasant plans and hopes seemed to wither for the time, and a dark cloud seemed to settle on my happy thoughts.

* * * * * *

Let me describe more fully the house that had so unexpectedly become my property.

As I have said, it was a tall, narrow-fronted house, attached on either side. There was an underground kitchen looking on the area, and a room behind the kitchen. On the ground floor was a small front-room, which my late relative had used presumably as a consulting-room, and a large room behind, furnished as a dining-room.

The first floor consisted of a small front and a larger back-drawing room, with a door of communication, which door I determined to abolish and substitute for it a plush curtain.

On the second floor were two bed rooms; on the third floor, two more; and from the latter floor, a narrow, ladder-like staircase, concealed by a door, led to a front and a back attic, whose dormer windows pierced the old sloping roof.

To descend again to the hall, as you entered from the street, up three shallow steps, you saw at the back of the hall to the left the stairs leading to the first floor. Behind them, out of sight from this point of view, were the stairs that led down to the underground rooms.

To the right, the hall, robbed of half its width by the stairs, continued to a door at the back, which opened into a large room built over the yard.

This had evidently been my uncle's operating room; though no positive proof remained that it had been so, for all his professional appliances and instruments he had willed to the hospital with which he had been connected.

Returning up the hall and mounting the stairs to the first floor, you found them to be rather unusually dark, and consisting of two flights, with a tiny landing at the turn.

It was just at this turn of the stairs leading to the first floor—a spot always gloomy even on a sunny day—that the strange experience always came to me. It invariably came to me, moreover, when I was thinking of something particularly pleasant and inspiring.

The first time was as I have said, before I had lived in my house a week. I had been looking at the drawing rooms, deciding what purchases I would make to brighten them up, before I gave my little at home; and as I ran lightly downstairs again, I was going over the small list of guests I proposed inviting.

"Mr. and Mrs. Hammond, the Tomlinsons, Sophy Penfold and her brother, Mrs. Dyer and her husband—if he'll come—and one or two of the girls, and—and Arthur Holt; there would be nothing pointed in it, as so many others are coming."

And just here, as I reached the darkest part of the staircase, where it turned, my thoughts were cut short by a shock that lightened through me; and out of the gloom there shone upon me for the first time that faint, scarcely defined appearance of a human face.

It was all over in a second. But I walked down the short flight into the hall, trembling from head to foot, my forehead moist and cold.

In a day or two, however, I was able to dismiss the thing tolerably from my mind. I accounted to myself amply for the seizure.

I had been letting my imagination run riot, I said, about this old house in which I had just taken up my abode; this old house dated from Anne's reign, and whose old-fashioned, low-ceiled rooms, I had often filled with belles and "toasts," in hoops and powder, and "Mohawks," with wigs and stiffened coat skirts.

Then again, I had thought of the old house as having been for nearly half a century the professional residence of my mother's half-brother. I had dreamed of the many sufferers of years ago, who had come here for relief; whose hearts had beat fast as they sat in that consulting room, and heard, perhaps, dread tidings; had beat faster yet, as they entered that fearsome operating room at the back; hearts long since stilled, never to throb again in fear, or falter again in pain.

These thoughts and imaginings, I told myself, were responsible for my seizure. I declined to look upon the matter seriously or timidly. I declined to remember that I was the seventh child of my parents, and that to a seventh child tradition assigns the eye of the seer. "Get thee behind me," I said to all such whispers as there, and went at the preparations for my little party with might and main. The at-home came off.

All my invited guests came. Everything went without a hitch. I was perfectly satisfied on all points save one. Arthur Holt seemed to have changed somewhat in his manner.

We had been great friends, he and I. I had first seen him about twelve months before the time I speak of.

I had taken a portion of a serial to submit to my best and nicest editor, and when I was shown into the editorial sanctum, a good looking young artist was just leaving the presence with a portfolio, the contents of which he had been displaying. My best editor, in bidding him good morning, asked him to call again. And so it chanced that he was employed to illustrate some of my contributions, and Arthur Holt and I became acquainted.

Our acquaintance grew into friendship; and just as I was wondering, at odd times, whether the friendship was destined to ripen into something else, I inherited my half-uncle's property.

The first time of our meeting after my change of circumstances was at my little party, and I thought his manner had grown colder and more formal. I suspected that my having become a woman of property was accountable for this—but still I felt a little low about it.

I had no intention of giving up my beloved literary work. Rather did I go at it with more zest than ever, now that I could pursue it in an independent manner.

Arthur Holt and I continued to meet in a business way. He was illustrating a serial of mine, and we had much to say to each other as to the situations that would best lend themselves to illustration.

He was as clever, as pleasant, as fascinating as ever; but I sighed as I perceived that a certain warmth and tenderness that had begun to appear in his manner, were now resolutely put by.

Weeks passed. The dark, short days came. I was as busy as possible making improvements in my house, brightening up the rooms with new pieces of furniture, new curtains, new draperies.

I was busy over my literary work too. I tried to banish all tendency to romantic musings over the past of the old house, hoping, in that way, to prevent any recurrence of my eerie experience.

My efforts were vain, however. I might banish all tendency to muse on the past, to bring back in fancy the former inhabitants of the old house.

But still, in passing that bend in the stairs between the hall and first floor, on more than one occasion I had felt the thrill, the creeping of the flesh—had seen the faint, undefined appearance of a face start from the gloom—and had walked on, with trembling, faltering steps, and clammy brow and hands.

It always happened, too, it seemed to me, when I was least thinking of it, when I was busy with the pleasantest, brightest, most hopeful of all my thoughts. At length, I began to find my nerves a little worn with this strange annoyance. I even began to consider, should I sell or let the house so lately become my own?

It seemed a thousand pities. I was angry with myself for entertaining the thought.

"Don't be such an idiot," I said to myself; "there's no fault with the house. You're neurotic, that's what it is. And you'd be quite as neurotic anywhere else as here."

But though I said this to myself, and tried to believe it, I began to feel my spirits droop a little, and my nerve fail, as I thought of what I had already suffered from this visitation, and what I might be destined yet to suffer.

I was in a rather sad mood, thinking over all these things one afternoon, when Arthur Holt called to consult me with regard to one or two of the illustrations he was at work on for the serial. Having done with our business, he was about to take leave, when, with a touch of his old kind manner, he said he feared I was a little out of spirits.

I told him I was; told him, though half ashamed to do so, what my trouble was; said that either I was in a wretchedly nervous state, or else the house was haunted—the house where I had hoped to be so comfortable—and that I had been thinking I must sell it. And then I was foolish enough to break down and cry.

All his recent coldness and reserve vanished at once. He came and sat by me, and talked in such a dear, kind, comforting way, that I was very soon able to dry my tears, and pluck up a little courage.

And then—then—he told me that he had loved me a long time, and had been going to tell me so, when I had inherited my uncle's property, and after that, he had held back from speaking in case I might think——

"I could never have thought it of you," I said; "never—never."

Well, we were very happy sitting by the fire in the winter afternoon. I forgot all about my eerie visitations.

My heart was full and light. When his visit was over, and I went down with him from the drawing room to the hall door, we were engaged, and it was settled that we were to be married as soon as ever I could make my preparations.

We were a long time saying "Good-bye;" but at last it was said. He walked away, looking back to wave his hand; and, after watching him till he vanished into the night, I shut the hall door, went back along the hall, and mounted the dark staircase (Anna had not yet lit the gas). I had reached the turn in the staircase with a light step and a heart throbbing with joy.

"No more nonsensical fancies now," I said. "They were the fancies of a lonely woman; and I am lonely no longer. Arthur loves me. Arthur and I——"

The words died on my lips. Once more that weird shock thrilled through me, but stronger, ten times stronger, than ever before. Once more the appearance of a face started from the gloom; but not now faintly shining and undefined.

With every lineament sharply marked, brilliantly clear, it rushed out of the darkness and glared close upon me—a wild-eyed face—a face mad with overmastering terror—a face only too familiar to me, though never seen with that dread look

upon it. Yes—crowning terror of terrors—my own face!

* * * * * *

When Anna came up to light the gas, she found me lying on the stairs half-insensible. I had swooned, and was just beginning to recover consciousness.

She helped me to my room, and I lay down. I would not have a doctor fetched. It was not a matter, I felt, in which a doctor could do anything for me. Nor did I tell good Anna what the cause of my swooning was.

I decided to go out of town immediately to some lively seaside place, Brighton or Bournemouth, and stay there till I should have recovered from the effects of my strange visitations; the last so much the most terrible. When I should feel strong again, it would be time to consider whether I should return to my house or sell it.

I wrote to Arthur telling him all. The following afternoon I went to Brighton, Arthur seeing me off at Victoria. He was to come down every Sunday and stay till Monday with a relative who lived in Brighton.

I went to a large boarding house on King's Road; and, what with the cheerful society there, the liveliness of the town, with the Brighton season in full swing, and Arthur's weekly visit, I soon became quite myself again.

He urged me to make any purchases and preparations that I had to make, now, so that our marriage need not be delayed. He even suggested its taking place at Brighton; but I thought I would prefer to return to town before the momentous day.

I stayed a month at Brighton; and then came back to No. 10, X—— Street, well and strong, prepared to face all and sundry in the way of ghostly experiences, and lay everything down to fancy.

We were to be married in a fortnight. The wedding was to be very quiet. No white satin or orange blossom. I was to wear a dark silk dress, stylishly made; the front of the bodice draped with coffee-colored lace; and a large picture hat to match.

One or two of our friends were to witness the marriage at a neighboring church; and a few more friends would afterwards come in to No. 10 to afternoon tea. Then, Arthur and I would leave for a trip to Devonshire, his native county.

The days flew away quickly enough till only one was left before the wedding-day. My dress had come home; and, knowing that Arthur would come in during the afternoon, I put the dress on to show him.

It certainly looked very nice as I viewed it by candle light in my bed-room. I turned critically round before a cheval glass, noting the hang of the skirt and the fit of the bodice.

All was just as it should be. I gave the lace draperies on the bodice a little final arrangement (I should wear some flowers there the day after to-morrow); and, taking a candle from the dressing-table, I went out of the room.

I had not gone many steps before I heard Arthur's knock at the hall-door: one of the servants came up from the kitchen to answer the door.

Just as I, with my candle in my hand, reached the bend in the stairs between the hall and first floor, the spot so often mentioned in this narrative, the hall door was opened.

The evening was stormy; and the door let in a blast of wind that rushed along the hall and up the stairs. It blew the flame of the candle I was carrying against the lace draped on my bodice, and, in a moment, the lace was ablaze.

I lost my presence of mind, screamed, rushed down the stairs, in at the open dining-room door; and there—there, reflected in the mirror over the side-board—there, above the blazing lace, which I was vainly endeavoring to crush with my bare hands—there was the face—wild-eyed, distraught with terror—which had first fully revealed itself to me on the dark staircase the evening I had become engaged.

* * * * * *

Thanks to Arthur, I was not seriously hurt. He wrapped me in the hearthrug, and, at the expense of some burns on his own hands, soon smothered the flames. Still, I was laid by for a time; and our wedding did not take place till a month after its appointed day.

We still live at No. 10, X—— street. No further eerie visitation has come to me. Arthur and I sometimes talk over my strange premonition, and agree that here was something beyond and above nerves and fancy. I often wonder whether my being a seventh child is accountable for this instance of the second sight. Still more often do I silently frame a hope that, if such a gift be indeed mine, it may lie dormant for the rest of my earthly life.

SECRET BENEFACTORS OF ROYALTY.—It is asserted that many European kings and princes are under great obligations to certain friends of theirs for timely financial aid.

Thus, the Prince of Wales is said to have been more than once assisted in this way both by the late Baron Hirsch and the late Sir James Mackenzie, while the restoration of the late King Alfonso to the throne of Spain is attributed in no small degree to the financial assistance derived from the late Duke of Santona.

The "benefactor" of the Emperor William before his accession was Baron Douglas, who was rewarded for his services by being created a Count as soon as his friend succeeded to the throne.

Victor Emmanuel of Italy used to have recourse to the late Khedive Ismail, who met with return for his kindness by finding the Court of Italy alone open to him after his deposition in 1879.

It is somewhat of a descent to ex-King Milan of Servia's "benefactor," the most probable owner of that title being the head of a certain Viennese pawnbroking establishment, where the ex-King has frequently pledged both his own and his wife's jewels in order to pay his gambling debts.

In consequence of his unfortunate Congo enterprise, King Leopold of Belgium has been from time to time involved in financial embarrassments, from which he is said to have been frequently extricated, first by the late Sir William Mackinnon, and subsequently by the late Colonel North.

In the above-mentioned instances, the royal personages assisted have always shown themselves duly grateful for the help rendered to them, and their "benefactors" have had little cause to regret their generosity.

But in one case it is known that such assistance ultimately led to the ruin and death of the too liberal donor.

The late Baron Fehleisen was no niggardly supporter of the Russian Grand Dukes, being satisfied to take in acknowledgment of his debts notes and bills signed by his imperial debtors, which, according to Russian law, cannot be recovered by process of law.

Consequently, he found himself in time unable to meet his own engagements, whereupon he committed suicide in singularly dramatic circumstances. He was attending the funeral of the Belgian envoy, and while standing by the open grave he suddenly fell headlong into it. When taken out he was found to be dead—self poisoned.

ORCHIDS GUARDED BY ODORS.—There died about a year ago a famous orchid-hunter named Fostermen. But before he died he told of a wonderful orchid which he said existed in Brazil, and which it had been the ambition of his life to secure.

Landing on the coast of Brazil, a few degrees south of the equator, he met a native chief, who told him of a "village of the demon flowers" to the westward.

Further questioning convinced him that the "demon flowers" were orchids of the rarest and most wonderful kind; so he decided to find this village at any cost.

He had travelled through forests about six weeks, and was calculating that in a fortnight more he would be in the neighborhood of the "village of the demon flower," when, one afternoon, three of his forward guards threw up their arms and, with a cry, fell senseless to the ground.

He had noticed a peculiar sickening odor pervading the heavy, heated air, and quickly gave the order for the other men to advance with caution, and drag back the three fallen ones from the spot where they lay.

They did so, and, returning, reported that they had seen through the forest a little further on, a vast "village of the demon flowers."

Accompanied only by his Portuguese interpreter, the orchid-seeker started forward, their mouths and noses muffled as a safeguard against the awful odor. They managed to reach the spot where the three men had been stricken down, but could go no further.

They could see, a hundred yards ahead of them, a great mass of orchids. Trees, undergrowth, and everything were loaded down with them. They were of hues more brilliant than he had ever seen or dreamed of seeing. But, like a barrier, the wall of awful, sickening, overpowering odor rose between them.

The mass of brilliant orchids might have been a mirage planted on the clouds, so far as reaching them was concerned. The village was perhaps an acre in extent, and the two made a complete circuit of it, but everywhere rose the awful odor.

This odor was simply the perfume of this vast mass of orchids. It is a curious fact that, though many orchids are almost scentless, some of the handsomest ones have a most unbearable smell.

WHEN WEALTH CAME.—The sudden elevation from poverty to riches is frequently accompanied by sometimes startling and generally amusing manifestations. Nine out of ten, when they find the gaunt wolf of hunger and inconvenience forever banished from their door, first think of the style in which they should live in order to conform to the magnificence of their suddenly acquired fortune, and they invest forthwith in as costly a house and grounds as they can afford.

Some, again, take extreme delight in parading the fruits of their new wealth before those of their neighbors whose opulence is of more mature age, and who have perhaps offered many a (fancied) snub.

A case in point is that of a lawyer's clerk, who a short time ago was fortunate enough to come into property of the value of several thousands of dollars, which enabled him to embark on a policy of revenge which he had long cherished in his mind.

His employer, a man of obscure origin and most offensive manners, had been in the habit of treating him with the utmost disdain, and, not unnaturally, the clerk thirsted for a chance of paying him back in his own coin.

The opportunity came with the advent of his great riches, and he took the fullest advantage of every occasion to excite the envy of his quondam employer, and to belittle him in the eyes of his friends.

He made a practice of driving in state past the lawyer's office two or three times a day, his "turn-out" in the morning being a smart and dashing tandem, and in the afternoon an elegant carriage and pair.

If the lawyer attended the theatre or any public meeting his once despised clerk was sometimes there occupying a better position than himself.

Finally, happening to hear of a debt of $2,500 owing by the lawyer, he bought it at a premium, sued for and recovered it, and administered the coup de grace by making his enemy a bankrupt.

"ICEBERGS AHEAD!"—The most formidable things that ocean pilots have to deal with are the icebergs coming down from Greenland and Polar regions.

The approach of a sailing vessel is heralded by the tooting of the foghorns, the steamer by the blowing of her whistles. But the iceberg comes without foghorn or whistle. It is silent as death, and as colorless as the atmosphere.

To guard against them all ocean steamships now go with a searchlight in their bows. At night it is shining brilliantly and is manned by the sharpest look-out of the crew; and in foggy days it is just as carefully attended.

It is only in the very clearest hours at noon-day, when the day is warmest, that the searchlight is put out for a time.

The approach of a berg is said to be unheralded, but to those who know the ocean there is a premonition of it. If the air becomes nipping, and the thermometer falls phenomenally low, then all know that it is very close, and watch for it.

The searchlight gets in its fine work now. With men carefully searching its rays it illumines the ocean, sometimes for miles ahead, and always far enough in the distance to permit the ship to turn and avoid a coming berg.

There is not one passenger in a thousand crossing the ocean who knows that there is a searchlight in the bows always alert for the moving ghosts. The gleam is for ships, they think, and they little imagine that it is for the fatal berg.

A THOUSAND eyes look for us and a thousand hands gather for us. The world is made tributary to us. The ends of the earth pour forth their treasures, and the ages of the past, as well as the age in which we live, rise to speak to us; and around us gather the worthies of thousands of years, and they come and stand before us, speaking in our ears, and their lives come before us as models of wisdom, of virtue, holiness, and of triumph. The world is full of these models.

NEVER put off till to-morrow what you should have done yesterday.

C. G. HANCOCK

DEATH OF C. G. HANCOCK.

The Well-Known Railroad Man Passes Away in This City.

Clinton G. Hancock, general passenger agent of the Philadelphia and Reading Railway Company, who has for thirty-two years been in the employ of that corporation, died December 20th from rheumatism of the heart at his home, 2032 Wallace street. He was born in Philadelphia, November 18, 1846. He was educated at the Northwest Grammar School and the Boys' High School. In 1863 he entered the employ of Furness, Brinley & Co., auctioneers, as clerk, and remained with them until 1864, when he accepted a clerkship in the freight department of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad. He was subsequently promoted to general ticket agent of the company and finally became its general passenger agent. At the time of his death he had been in the employ of the company for thirty-two years. Mr. Hancock leaves a widow and three daughters. Mr. Hancock's health has been failing for the past five years, and during that period he has been a great sufferer from rheumatism. He was last at his office on December 12. He has four brothers and one sister.

Scientific and Useful.

SPEAKERS.—During the trying winds of winter a baked lemon is an excellent remedy for hoarseness, and one often resorted to by singers and public speakers. The lemon is baked like an apple, and a little of the heated and thickened juice squeezed over lump sugar.

CEMENT FOR CLOTH.—Use thin sheet gutta-percha, which can be purchased of the manufacturers especially for tailors' use. Place a piece of the tissue between the layers of cloth to be cemented and press with a hot iron. This causes the cloth to adhere firmly on account of the melting of the gutta-percha.

THE PNEUMATIC TUBE.—The pneumatic tube system for carrying small parcels and small packages is to be laid down in Boston. The system has been in use in European cities for the last fifty years, but the majority of the tubes are only three inches in diameter. The Boston system will have eight-inch tubes.

PAPER.—Paper has been put to a variety of uses, but its most curious employment is foreshadowed in the recent patenting of a blotting paper towel. The idea is that a person on stepping out of his bath, instead of rubbing himself dry in the orthodox manner, should envelop his body in a towel made of blotting paper, which will, without trouble, and in a few seconds absorb all the moisture upon his skin. The idea is ingenious, but it does away with that wholesome friction which many believe to be so beneficial to the skin.

AUTOMATIC MACHINE.—The automatic machine idea has been turned to new account in Italy. Put a coin in the slot and take out a receipt and the thing is done. The workingman's "honest penny" is banked without the trouble of going to a savings bank or post-office. When a sufficient number of receipts have been collected they can be exchanged for a "libretto" at the regular savings bank. Interest at 4 per cent. is paid on deposits, and the depositors are entitled to a share of the profits derived from the bank's operations.

DR. D. JAYNE'S EXPECTORANT certainly does go directly to the root of all Throat and Lung troubles. There is abundant evidence of this in its sixty-two years' record of cures. If bilious take Jayne's Painless Sanative Pills.

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Outgoing and Incoming.

Seeing the Old Year out and the New Year in—that is a phrase and an observance which one enjoys or else deprecates, according to temperament and to time of life. The sympathies of the old are with the outgoing year, those of the young with the incoming one. Age is moved to sigh for the loss of yet another old friend. Youth is stirred to greet merrily and hopefully an unknown new one. The difference is as that between sighting at gladsome break of day a ship stored with promises and with lives we love, and wistfully gazing at eventide on the receding, sinking, vanishing sails that have left our coast for evermore.

The rule in life is known of all men, and held worthy of all acceptation, to "welcome the coming, speed the parting guest." And after this sort the sons and daughters of men in their generations are apt to treat the year that goes out, and the year that comes in.

That which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away; there is but a step between it and death. That is a step soon taken; and the sooner the better, think, if not say, all eager expectants. These are too sanguine of something better in the new to be full of regrets at parting with the old; and they are not in the mood to agree in terms with such seasoned experts in wine as are used to the old, and stick by it, and so far from straightway desiring new, say rather that the old is better.

The conjugation-point of an outgoing and an incoming year, where they not so much collide as merge the one in the other, resembles that of an old and a new reign, when the formula of adieu and of all hail is in force—"The King is dead. Live the King!" Seeing the last of the old king is but seeing the first of the new, and in the excitement of novelty is lost any lingering sense of regret.

Shelley's dirge for the Old Year recognizes alike orphan hours for whom the year is dead, and whom therefore he bids "come and sigh, come and weep," and merry hours, whom on the other hand he bids "smile instead, for the Year is but asleep. See, it smiles as it is sleeping, mocking your untimely weeping." What thought that rough nurse White Winter rocks the dead-cold years to-day, and the solemn hours are invoked to wail aloud for their mother in her shroud? "Trembling hours; she will arise, with new love within her eyes." And how runs Barry Cornwall's song for the New Year? To the same tune, of the greenwood lone, and the wild bee humming. The winter is cold and gray, and totters about on a palsied knee, with a frozen heart and a feeble head. "Let us pierce a barrel and drink him dead," say some. Others say rather "Hark to the Past," which in bitter tone exclaims, "The good Old Year is flown," and the sire of a thousand thoughtful hours, of a thousand songs, of a thousand flowers—which surely deserve some remembrance, and should not quite perish in the using.

Noting in his diary the opening of the year 1826, to him opening sadly, Sir Walter Scott remarks how sensibly these divisions of time influence our feelings as they recur, although in reality there is nothing in it, for every day in the year closes a twelvemonth as well as does the last day of December. But this thirty-first is a solemn pause, as when a guide, showing a wild and mountainous road, calls on a party to look back at the scenes which they have just passed.

It has been observed that the prospect we see from the first day of the New Year is the self-same prospect we see from the last day of the Old, saving the change made by twenty-four hours' progress towards the horizon of the future; still, as we alter the date, fancy hears the wings of Time waved for another flight, and nations and men leave the past behind them and renew their hopes—renew their hopes, not their forebodings—their hopes, for instance, in this now moribund year of grace 1896, that 1897 may not be as 1896, but much more abundant.

What though we all know that in any given life and in any given period of time there will be at least as much to bear as to enjoy? We ring for the enjoyment, without tolling for the suffering that is to come. "Ring out the old, ring in the new, Ring, happy bells, across the snow; the Year is going, let him go; Ring out the false, ring in the true." Ring out the grief that saps the mind for those that here we see no more—the want, the care, the sin, the faithless coldness of the times; ring in the love of truth and right, ring in the common love of good. "Ring out the darkness of the land, Ring in the Christ that is to be." So wrote and hoped the bard of In Memoriam when the time drew near the birth of Christ, and the moon was hid and the night still, and he heard a single peal of bells that awakened within him that dear memory and these dear hopes, at the hour of rest.

Of all sounds of all bells—"bells, the music nighest bordering upon heaven"—most solemn and touching to Charles Lamb was the peal which rings out the Old Year. He never heard it, as Elia he tells us, without a gathering up of his mind to a concentration of all the images that had been diffused over the past twelvemonth—all he had done or suffered, performed or neglected, in that regretted time. He began to know its worth, as when a person dies. It took for him a personal color; and he counted as no poetical flight the poet's utterance, "I saw the skirts of the departing Year."

To him it was an awful leave-taking; the more so that he was naturally shy beforehand of novelties—new books, new faces, new years—from some mental mist which made it difficult in him to face the prospective. For, when he wrote his essay on New Year's Eve, Elia had almost ceased to hope, and was sanguine only in the prospects of other, meaning former, years. The elders with whom he was brought up were of a character not likely to let slip the sacred observance of any old institution; and the ringing out of the Old Year was kept by them with circumstances of peculiar ceremony.

In those days the sound of midnight chimes, though it seemed to raise hilarity in all around him, never failed to bring a train of pensive imagery into his fancy. If it was so with the young man, much more might the middle-aged one begin to feel these reminders but too powerfully—begin to count the probabilities of his duration, and to grudge at the expenditure of moments and shortest periods, like misers' farthings. In proportion as the years both lessened and shortened, he set more count upon their periods, and would fain lay his ineffectual finger upon the spoke of the great wheel.

Charles Dickens was in the heyday of health and spirits when he inveighed with a will against a "lachrymose set of people" who usher in the New Year with watching and fasting, as if they were bound to attend as chief mourners at the obsequies of the old one. He professed to deem it a great deal more complimentary, both to the Old Year just dying, and to the new one just dawning, to "see the old fellow out and the new one in with gaiety and glee." But, as Judge Haliburton says in one of those books of his in which seriousness is not incompatible with prevailing humor, it is a "serious" thing to think that we are one entire year nearer the grave than we were that day twelvemonth, and to reflect that the self-examination so appropriate to the occasion is postponed to what we are pleased to call a more fitting opportunity.

But we have, all of us, more or less reason to sadden as the deep tongue of midnight on New Year's Eve tolls no more. There are shadows thrown down by the old Old Year, "dim as the echoes that lately fell from the deep Night's bell, sounding hollow o'er hill and vale, like the close of a mournful tale." Of these things ought we to remember something, while not forbearing to welcome to the full those other things of gladness which a New Year can proffer.

THERE are certain obstacles in every path that can be overcome only by the presence of self-confidence. There are outward hindrances to encounter, opposition to meet, difficulties to surmount, prejudices to sweep away, the very presence of which will terrify and appal the wavering and despondent, while they will melt away before the dignity of self-respect and self-reliance. There are also the innumerable obstacles from within, the inclinations to curb, passions to restrain, desires to guide, temptations to resist; these also need not only the power to deal with them, but a confidence in that power that can alone make it effective.

IT is the health rather than the strength that is the great requirement of modern men at modern occupations. It is not the power to travel great distances, carry great burdens, lift great weights, or overcome great material obstructions; it is simply that condition of body and that amount of vital capacity which shall enable each man, in his place, to pursue his calling and work on in his working life with the greatest amount of comfort to himself and usefulness to his fellow-men.

IN life things are important not according to their individual measurement or emphasis, but according to their report to the eye or to the ear. Singly they are like grains of sand, but united they are vast as the shore. The shore cannot spare its sand. Human life makes itself by its little deeds, and becomes great by the sum of all its minute things.

WHAT can we do, each of us, to help others to bear their burden of sadness? This—if we are merry, our mirth will not be lessened by trying to bring good cheer to others less fortunate than ourselves; if we too are sad, our sadness will be made lighter by forgetting ourselves in thinking for others.

WHATEVER a man honestly believes to be his duty claims his uncompromising and unhesitating allegiance; and every time he disobeys the call of duty he falls a step lower in the scale of character. Like all other powers within us, it is strengthened by exercise and weakened by disuse.

A REALLY good man had rather be deceived than be suspicious, and rather forego his own right than run the venture of doing even a hard thing. This is the temper of that charity of which the apostle says that it shall never fail.

CONFIDENTIAL CORRESPONDENTS.

W. B. S.—Nero has always had the bad eminence of being considered the cruelest of the Emperors of Rome.

KITTY.—If you have a good voice you should cultivate it as much as possible, so that when called upon to sing you may do so without hesitation, and add to the enjoyment of the company present.

ELLIE.—Mr. W. H. Vanderbilt left four sons—William K., Cornelius, Frederick and George. His four daughters, all of whom are married, are Mrs. Elliot Shepherd, Mrs. Sloane, Mrs. Twombley and Mrs. Webb.

E. S.—The average height of lads of fourteen would be about five feet; and of eighteen years, five feet six, with a weight of from 130 to 140 pounds. The average height of men is from five feet four to five feet ten, and the heaviest bulk is at thirty-five, averaging then about 152 pounds. Women average from four feet six to five feet five, and weigh at maturity about 128 pounds. Men range from 106 to 229 pounds, and women from 88 to 207 pounds.

G. L. W.—A beautiful complexion is chiefly dependent on perfection of health; and that desirable condition attaches to a full circulation of the blood, unimpaired digestion, habits of regular out-of-door exercise, frequent bathing, a diversion of the mind by a happy intermixture of daily duties and lively recreations, and the possession of a flow of animal spirits which leads the possessor to be at peace with the world and herself.

BERT.—The origin of the phrase, "A Roland for an Oliver," is given by Thomas Warburton in these words:—"These were two of the most famous in the list of Charlemagne's twelve peers; and their exploits are rendered so ridiculously and equally extravagant by the old romancers that from thence arose that saying, amongst our plain and sensible ancestors, of giving one a 'Roland for an Oliver,' to signify the matching of one incredible lie with another."

H. B. A.—The precise part which sugar plays as food is not made out with sufficient clearness to admit of specific statement. It certainly helps to maintain the heat of the body; and it is important as an article of diet, in early life particularly. Sugar also helps to form fat. The danger of taking too much habitually is that the liver—the organ which has most to do with the sugar of the food—is likely to be overworked, and to fall into a state of disease. It is not wise to take very large quantities of this article of diet habitually; but no evil is likely to result from its moderate or even liberal use, unless it be found to produce dyspepsia, or what is termed biliousness. It is better to be moderate in the use of all things than to abstain wholly from any.

TOBO.—The average weight of the human brain in adults is less than 50 ounces. An officer of the civil service in India, mentioned in a recent number of the Lancet, had a brain which weighed very nearly 60 ounces, thus being exceeded only by those respectively of Cuvier, 64¾ ounces, and Dr. Abercrombie, 63 ounces, among the brains of great size known to the medical profession. There is a record, however, of a brain examined at University College, in 1873, which weighed 67 ounces, and it was that of a bricklayer who could not read or write. This case may be regarded as exceptional, for the relation between a large brain and high intellectural development is well established. The British Indian officer to whom we have referred was distinguished for his brilliant attainments, and is described as a man of mark in whatever society he might be. He killed himself by over-work.

R. J.—The Turkish order of Medjidie was instituted in 1852, and conferred after the Crimean war, to a considerable extent, upon officers. It has five classes, and the decoration, which differs in size for the different classes, is a silver sun of seven triple rays, with the device of the crescent and the star alternating with the rays. On a circle of red enamel, in the centre of the decoration, is a legend in Turkish, whose signification is "Zeal, Honor, and Loyalty," and the date 1268, the Mohammedan year corresponding to 1852. The Sultan's name is inscribed on a gold field within this circle. The first three classes suspend the badge around the neck from a red ribbon having green borders, and the fourth and fifth classes wear it attached to a similar ribbon on the left breast. A star, whose design closely resembles that of the badge, is worn on the left breast by the first-class, and on the right breast by the second-class.

TOM TUG.—Young ladies are very sensitive to any dictatorial acts on the part of gentlemen, and are quick to resent them. It is not surprising that your friend acted as she did, as it is apparent you were in fault when you undertook to speak and write so "strongly" to her. Her declining of your invitation to a soiree was given in good faith, on the ground of a prior engagement, and you had no right to call her to account when you chanced to meet at the same dancing hall. Her cold manner when you ventured to give her a polite scolding for her acceptance of another gentleman's escort home, and her non-reply to your note in the same key, were all pretty much what any young lady would have manifested. Yet it is now apparent, from her cordiality towards you in the street, that she recognizes your offences were all unintentional, and is willing to be good friends again. If you will at once display the same cordial spirit towards her, and put aside your feelings of mortified pride, you may easily become all in all to each other.

THE OLD YEAR.

BY A. B.

Gone! but its clouds of black
Are streaked with threads of gold;
Hopes for the budding year
Dear memories of the old.

Sad recollection bonds
In those loud-pealing bells,
The joyous and the sad;
And, as the clock tower tells,

That from our tale of years
One more has passed away,
And one more unwrit page,
Has opened with the day,

Those mellow midnight chimes
Seem to our listening ears
Bright harbingers of Hope,
Yet charged with unshed tears.

Ah, yes! the page is blank,
The future all unknown;
Beyond recall the past;
The Present is our own.

Hilda's Future.

BY S. U. W.

"I THINK I am ready now," said Hilda thoughtfully, moving away from the mirror.

It was a very pleasant picture on which her eyes had rested that New Year's day—that of a slim girl clad in virginal white, embroidered with silver, with a pinky white throat and arms, a small well poised head, a crown of fluffy light-brown hair with a silver arrow in it, and a pair of large soft hazel eyes.

Hilda was not exactly pretty. She was too pale, and her features were somewhat irregular. She lacked brilliancy; but it was her expression which was so irresistibly taking.

Her maid gave a final approving pat to the graceful drapery of the ball gown.

"You was right, Miss 'Ilda. It did suit you to wear all white," she said, with the air of one making a concession. "I should 'a' thought a touch of color was wanted; but you was right, I confess I"

"It is my eyes and eyelashes," remarked Hilda reflectively. "If they were not so dark I could not do it. What a comfort to think they are!"

"You're ready now—ain't you, miss?"

"Yes, Atkins—I think so."

"Mrs. and Miss Stedman have come—they are waiting for you."

With a happy sigh, Hilda took up a delicate fan.

"I think you would call my dress artistic, wouldn't you, Atkins?"

"Downright artistic, miss!"

"Laura Stedman always dresses so artistically; but then she has so much money! She is a great heiress. Oh, I do hope I shall look as well as she does to night!"

"Laws, miss, Miss Stedman ain't a patch on you! I wouldn't look at her alongside of you for a moment!"

Hilda flitted downstairs, a smile upon her pretty lips. It was so pleasant to be young and free from care, to be going to a ball, and to expect to meet there so charming a man as Leslie Willis the artist.

Hilda Northey was motherless. Her father was a colonel in an Indian regiment, who had all his life enjoyed but occasional glimpses of his only daughter. The care of Hilda was undertaken by Miss Eccott, an aunt of her father's, who lived near Regent's Park in a comfortable little house called Brook Villa, and treated her nephew's daughter with kindly indulgence.

Unfortunately for Hilda, "aunt Fanny" suffered from a weakness of the chest which prevented her going out much of an evening; the girl therefore went out with other chaperons, and was consequently less tenderly guarded than would have been the case had she had the benefit of Miss Eccott's care.

Hilda had been brought up very simply and quietly. She knew comfort, but not luxury. She had gone to a good day-school, and there made the acquaintance of several girls of her own age, now grown up like herself.

These all invited her to their parties, and Hilda became "quite gay," as her aunt phrased it. She was glad the child should be happy and amused, and, in allowing her to go to the dances in the neighborhood to which she was invited, she was fulfilling Colonel Northey's express wishes.

"Let the child have all all she wants," he had written; "let her mix freely in society; but let her mix in it as a nobody. London is brimful of fortune hunters. Don't let anybody know what my little girl is worth. Keep her to the dress allowance I send; let her think it is all I can afford. I wish she might keep single till she sees Borodaile. He comes over on furlough next year. He is the only man I ever saw to whom I would willingly hand over my treasure; but I suppose that's too much to expect. Any way, do as I tell you. Keep her fortune quite dark, or she will be snapped up by a designing curate before her first season is over."

Such were the Colonel's wishes, and his aunt had respected them. Hilda was twenty; this was her third winter, and she was single still.

This winter Leslie Willis had appeared upon the scene; but Miss Eccott had heard very little of him.

He seemed to obtain, as if by magic, invitations to all the houses where Hilda visited; but then he danced so well and was so handsome that invitations were never difficult for him to procure.

He was quite certain to be of Mrs. Stedman's party this evening. They were going to a ball at the Vestry Hall—such a ball as is frequently given in the suburbs, twenty ladies subscribing for the cost, and each inviting twenty guests. Mrs. Stedman was one of the twelve ladies, and Hilda Northey was one of her twenty guests.

Mrs. Stedman and her daughter were waiting in the drawing room of Brook Villa when Hilda came down stairs. "Aunt Fanny" mused over the contrast between the two girls.

There was a red shade on a lamp near the door which threw a rose tint over Hilda as she entered. A long soft white cashmere cloak covered her white dress. Her aureole of hair and a certain radiance in her face, and especially in her eyes, made Miss Eccott think she looked almost angelic.

Miss Stedman was undeniably handsome—handsome in a full fleshy style, with large magnificent eyes and raven hair. She wore scarlet and gold, and there were many beads on her dress, which rattled as she walked.

She wore no sleeves, and her arms were a trifle too large to be so fully displayed; but the general effect was striking. A diamond necklet flashed, limpid and sparkling, on her smooth throat. "Heiress" seemed written legibly all over her.

"Oh, Laura," sighed Hilda softly, as she closed the door, "how splendid! What an artistic gown. You look what I should call 'tempting!'"

"We must be off now. I must be at the hall in time to receive my guests," said Mrs. Stedman, who wore a plum-colored silk and plush costume.

"I hope Willis will be there," remarked her daughter carelessly, arranging the clasp of her long plush cloak, which was heavily lined with fur. "I told him to come early to help me to introduce."

This speech grated terribly on Hilda's nerves, and this for two reasons.

First, she noticed with pain a great deterioration in Laura's manners now that she had found out how much adulation she and her fortunes could command.

"Two years ago she would not have worn her dress cut so low," she reflected; "nor would she have spoken of a gentleman by his surname like that, without prefix."

The second reason went deeper. At the last dance at which Hilda had met Leslie Willis he had asked her to dance only twice.

For this he had satisfactorily accounted, telling her that he was burdened with duty dances; but these had not prevented his sitting out three consecutive dances with Laura in the conservatory.

Hilda had suffered all the premonitory pangs of jealousy; but her nature was so sweet and so reasonable that from this she had rapidly recovered.

"Good night, auntie dear. Atkins will wait up for me," she said, laughing. "And, if my 'future' arrives this evening, you may tell him he need not call again!"

The closing part of her speech was whispered into "Aunt Fanny's" ear, and was received with much merriment.

Evidently this "future" was a stock joke. He was none other than he to whom Colonel Northey in his letter alluded as "Borodaile."

The good Colonel had had the inconceivable folly to mention this pattern man in more than one letter to his daughter, with broad hints as to his desires.

Whenever he arrived in England, Captain Borodaile was to be sumptuously entertained at Brook Villa; and the last mail from India had borne the exciting news that the long-expected visitor was really on his way.

But nothing was farther from Hilda's thoughts than her "future" as the brougham rolled her swiftly towards the Vestry Hall.

Her fancy was full of Leslie Willis. Vividly before her mind was the image of his fair ruffled hair, provokingly straight nose, disdainful moustache, and dangerous eyes. The thought of him stirred her whole being. As they neared the flight of red hazel covered steps, her heart beat wildly.

The big dancing room was already filling when the trio entered it. Young men were assiduously providing programmes for their fair ones, and the band was tuning up.

Leslie Willis, with his steward's favor—a morsel of poppy red ribbon—in his button hole, was hastening to and fro on Mrs. Stedman's errands, assembling her party for her.

Apparently he did not see Hilda, though he passed very near her. She saw that he was busy; she would wait; she had a radiant smile ready for him when he chose to come for it.

Five minutes and more ebbed away, while he passed and re-passed her, his eyes always in another direction. Some one came up, shook hands, and asked for a dance.

She gave it, not knowing in the least to whom she spoke. Some one else followed; a third begged to introduce his friend. Her card was filling. She looked round piteously.

Mr. Willis stood at a little distance from her, with a nervous looking youth, who, by his tell-tale face directed towards Hilda and the spasmodic nudges he gave his companion, evidently craved for an introduction. The artist turned at once, caught Hilda's eye, and came up, cool, smiling, and business-like.

"How do you do, Miss Northey?"—with a confidential shake of the hand. "I hope Miss Eccott is well! Yes? That's right! May I introduce Mr. Watkins? I wonder if you will have a dance to spare for me later in the evening? My duties as steward make it too uncertain at present——"

He had smiled, bowed, left her. That was all. This was how he treated her, this man who a month ago, as a matter of course, monopolized half her programme. What could she have done to merit such treatment? Had she shown him how much she cared—been unmaidenly?

The torturing thoughts racked her. She stood stonily still, unconscious of her surroundings, unconscious of the fact that the first "extra" had just struck up, unconscious, most of all, of her own exceeding charm as she stood, mentally reeling under this her first experience of the hollowness of society.

It had suited Leslie Willis' purpose to be civil to Hilda Northey; now he fancied he could do better, so he turned his back upon her.

How Hilda had looked forward to this dance! How her quick imagination had revelled in joys to come! And now the passion which possessed her seemed to express itself in every line and curve of her pliant figure.

"Our dance, I think, Miss Northey?"

It was young Wade, of the tennis club, an inoffensive youth enough. What was to be done? To dance was surely impossible. And yet what alternative was there for her?

None! To plead illness—to retire? Oh, never, never! Hilda had not known before that she was proud; but now a strong feeling of pride leaped into life in her heart. Let Leslie Willis see the effects of his treatment? If she died of it, she would dance.

Several strangers eagerly begged the steward for introductions to the girl in white and silver. Leslie Willis was a true artist—with one touch he had converted pale Hilda into a beauty.

Every one was admiring her. Her pale cheeks were tinged with carmine—delicate and clear as the reflection of a sunset cloud.

She was recovering her self control, smiling at the applicants for dances, promising everything, even the "extras."

Thank Heaven, even if Leslie came now he would have no chance—there was not a space left.

"Well, Hilda, and how are you getting on? Oh, famously, I see. Your card is quite full," said Mrs. Stedman, pressing forward. "Why, you are almost as much in demand as Laura."

"Getting on well, dear?" inquired Laura sweetly. "I am so glad! My card was full before the first dance began; but, when Willis gets hold of a programme, there's not much left for anybody else! Now don't for pity's sake ask to see it, Hilda!"

"See your programme? I don't want to," said Hilda bluntly.

Leslie Willis came up at the moment.

"Our dance, Miss Stedman. Ah, Miss Northey, are you in want of partners? Because, if so, do let me help you——"

"There is no need, thank you; my card is quite full," said Hilda clearly and simply, looking him straight in the face.

A transient expression flitted over Willis' handsome features—an expression very like one of regret or pique. He was about to speak, but Laura broke in with—

"Oh, Mr. Willis, we are losing the chance of a clear floor!"—and in a moment they were gone.

Nobody knew how far the artist had permitted himself to go when his flirtation with pretty Miss Northey had been his chief amusement for the time being.

As he thought it over he did feel a little uncomfortable. He had done the thing too suddenly, he told himself; a dance should have been asked for for form's sake. Yet what could he have said to her—how have kept from tender speeches when she looked so lovely as she did to-night?

Nothing less than a complete surrender would satisfy Laura, he knew; and in such an enterprise he must run no risk of failure. Yet he would have given a great deal to know how much Hilda cared.

"This is our dance, Miss Northey."

The pleasant voice was a stranger's, and for a moment Hilda rallied completely. A tall plain man stood before her, looking down at her with expressive blue eyes. He seemed about thirty five years old, and there was something in his appearance which instantly prepossessed her. Looking up shyly, she placed her hand within his arm.

"I must apologize for being a minute late," he said. "I could not find you in the crowd. Let us make up for lost time."

They were gliding easily down the room amongst the revolving couples, but Hilda saw only a flash of scarlet and gold.

It seemed to dazzle her eyes as she followed it through all its gyrations. Her partner was waltzing in silence—he waltzed remarkably well. Hilda perceived, as she danced on mechanically, that Leslie Willis was watching her.

Presently her partner spoke—suddenly.

"I ought to make you sit down," he said; "but I can't—I am enjoying myself so. Like all my set, I am selfish."

"Why should I sit down?" she gasped. "I am not tired."

"Yes, you are. Excuse the contradiction. Yes I am wrong—it is not fatigue; it is——"

"Nothing," she said affrightedly, and unconsciously tightened her hold upon his arm.

The room was going round with her. Dimly, as they passed a doorway, she saw that the red and gold dress had ceased, revolving

Laura was standing in the archway with her hand on Leslie's arm, watching Hilda. The girl raised her eyes suddenly to those of her partner.

"Listen!" she faltered. "I feel as if I were going to faint. I don't wish to. Oh, help me not to show it. Help me to go on to the end. I want to seem all right. You understand?"

It was indeed a strange request, but it did not seem to surprise the man to whom it was addressed. He began dimly to understand. His eyes met hers, and he spoke very gently, but like one used to command.

"Look at me," he said distinctly. "Think of nothing but me. Go on dancing; but throw all your weight upon me. I will hold you up."

"Yes, yes," she said tremulously, obediently raising her hazel eyes.

"Think only of what I am saying," he went on steadily. "You have plenty of imagination. Imagine for a moment that you and I are alone together in this room, and that I have the right to command you. I order you to move on—like this—thinking only of me, until we have rounded the room once more. When we reach the further doorway I shall take you out, downstairs, to rest. Are you listening?"

"Yes—I hear every word, but as if I were dreaming. Oh, help me to do nothing that will make people look at me! Do I look mad?"

"Certainly not! You are perfectly rational. You are obeying orders splendidly. There—we have accomplished it. Now nerve yourself to walk a few steps. In a moment you shall be where you may rest for a while."

It was over. He had guided her past the doorway where Miss Stedman and her partner stood, without so much as her knowing it. She had obediently fixed her

eyes upon him, as he directed, and now the feeling of faintness was leaving her.

He led her through the refreshment room to a more dimly lighted apartment beyond. It was so early in the evening that it was almost empty. She sank into a low chair, saw him unfurl her fan and place it in her hand so as to screen her face, then heard him say:—

"I shall leave you for a moment to fetch you some wine. Don't move until I return."

He was gone. She was alone in a quiet corner which afforded untold relief to her overstrung nerves. He had placed her behind a tall screen, which concealed her well from view.

She closed her eyes and rested her head on the cushion; she did not want to think. She now felt as if she had no future; as if the story of her life were told.

Presently the stranger returned; he had been absent just long enough to enable her to rally a little. She looked at him with grateful eyes.

"Oh, thank you!" she cried, scarcely knowing what she meant.

"Have I done you a little service?" he asked, sitting down deliberately by her. "Well, in return you must drink this."

He gave her a wine glass, and she drank obediently, leaning back afterwards in her chair with a sense of utter lassitude. But full consciousness had returned; she had begun to feel that some apology was needed. So she smiled, a wan forced smile, and said falteringly:—

"How stupid to grow faint so suddenly! I have never felt so before. I cannot understand how I came to be so foolish."

"I understand quite well," he returned, with a smile.

"What do you mean?" she cried quickly.

He fixed his honest blue eyes upon her face with an expression at once frank and baffling.

"I am a clairvoyant, you see," he said seriously.

"You are joking."

"No indeed. I see things in a most extraordinary way. There is a man here who ought to have his head punched—I am eager to do it; yet nobody who did not know his private concerns would feel as I do about him. I know how mean and contemptible his motives are, and yet he passes among all these people as a charming fellow. I should like to expose him."

Hilda was puzzled—so puzzled that her attention was completely caught. Who could this man be—this man with the commonplace exterior, who yet talked so strangely? Shyly she studied his plain features, his large bristly moustache, his long limbs.

They seemed at variance with his kind eyes; and under the great reddish moustache was a mouth as tender as a woman's. She was still so much of a child that for a moment she longed to be confidential; but an instant's reflection showed her that that was impossible.

"I don't understand you, of course," she said timidly. "I am sorry you think so badly of anybody here."

"Well, don't you?" was his instant and embarrassing question.

"I am not a clairvoyante; I cannot see into people's minds as you can," she answered promptly.

"Well replied!" he said, with an amused smile. "You are not quite a novice, I see, Miss Northey."

"Again I don't understand."

"Very probably. But time is passing; I want to come to terms. You have allowed me, in your kindness, the privilege of being of some slight service to you. Won't you employ me again?"

"I beg your pardon?"

"I will explain. Is it your intention to dance through the programme and brave the matter out, or will you go home at once?"

"Brave the matter out?"

"Yes—brave it out! It is of no use to try to dissemble with me, you see. If you like, I can tell you exactly how you feel."

"Please do," she said, wondering more and more.

"Well, you are in this position. You have been wantonly insulted by a good-for-nothing jackass, to whom you have shown nothing but kindness. The fellow's good manners were only a very thin veneer to his native grossness. To night he has shown you what he is capable of. Is not that so?"

She was too astounded to do more than draw a deep breath. He went on.

"For some time past he has favored you with much of his valuable company—so much so that perhaps one or two people may have remarked it. To-night, as he sees fit to turn his back upon you, perhaps that may be remarked too."

Hilda clasped her hands with a sudden start.

"Wouldn't it be better to let people think the avoidance is mutual—to let them fancy he is out out?" suggested the stranger warily.

She looked at him, bewildered.

"Would it help you if I offered myself to you for the evening?" he asked, with a suggestion of fun in his eyes. "Do you think you have pride enough to put up with a good deal of my society—to dance with me, talk to me, go in to supper with me? If you would not mind too much, it would be really worth doing."

"But," said the girl confusedly, "all my dances are taken."

"Let me show you your card."

Hilda produced it.

"At the beginning of the evening," he said humorously, "I regret to say that you were a trifle absent minded. When young Wade introduced me, I asked what dances I might have. You replied, without looking at me, that I might take which I chose. I resented not being looked at, so, to punish you, I took all these. When I gave you back your drogramme, you took not the least notice."

"Well, I am sure!" was all the girl could find to say.

"Now," he went on, "what say you? These dances are mine, you see; but, if you don't feel that you could go through them, I renounce them all. On the other hand, I am ready to go through them, if you so decide."

"I think," said Hilda earnestly, after a bewildered pause, "you are the strangest person I ever met."

"Well, I am odd; but I believe I am to be trusted."

"Ah, how do I know that?" she questioned sadly.

"I know how you feel, and it is very natural," he said. "Being yourself by nature a lady, you have hitherto imagined that all the men you met were gentlemen. Finding that such is not the case, you are now tempted to think that no man is a gentleman; but I hope that is not true either."

"I *feel* as if you were good," sighed Hilda.

"I don't know about that; but I am sincerely anxious to befriend you. I am your slave for to-night. I will dance or sit still, speak or be silent, as you shall dictate. Do you agree?"

As he spoke two persons entered the darkened room where they sat, and stood looking about for a seat.

Hilda heard the rattle of beads, saw the gleam of scarlet and gold, and her answer seemed to be forced from her.

"Yes, yes—I agree."

She assented, and, laying her hand upon his arm, rose and passed out, with a smile and a nod to Laura.

"We bequeath our seats to you," she said lightly.

Leslie Willis looked after her with knitted brows.

"Just look at Hilda Northey," said Miss Stedman, with some dissatisfaction—"sitting flirting here with that man, of all men in the place!"

"Who is he?" asked Leslie, sitting down languidly.

"Oh, he is some important personage who came with the Wades! Mrs. Lucas told me he was a tremendous 'catch,' and related to Lord Wedderburn. I wonder if I can get introduced!"

"Surely it is too late! Your card is full."

"Oh, I would throw over anybody—even you—to dance with an earl's nephew!"

This cruel retort was in retaliation for the furtive look she had seen him send after Hilda. It brought him back speedily to his duty.

Meanwhile Miss Northey and the stranger had returned to the ball-room. The girl was quite herself now. The idea that the people present might think her deserted acted like a spur.

Her mysterious partner waltzed exceptionally well, and by the end of that dance she was quite ready to take the next partner on her list and talk composedly about nothing. All the time she was dancing her new friend stood as sentinel against the doorway. He sought no other fair one. All were free to notice, if they would, that he danced with nobody but Miss Northey.

"My dear," said Mrs. Wade presently, as the girl paused beside her for a moment, "you have made a conquest—the part of the evening."

She also murmured as much to Mrs. Stedman, whose temper was not improved by the revelation. What—that pale little chit of a Hilda, whom she chaperoned about as a foil to her own daughter, dancing with this eligible stranger, while Laura was bestowing her whole programme upon the artist, who, though he might be the local society pet, certainly had nothing but his own personal attractions!

Hilda and her partner grew very friendly as the evening wore on, and towards the closing dance they repaired again to their seat behind the screen in the dimly-lighted ante-room.

"It seems ages since I sat here before," said Hilda artlessly.

"Has it been as bad as you expected?" he asked.

"Oh, no! You have been so kind—you have helped me immensely! Who are you?" she asked suddenly.

"I am a clairvoyant—as I told you at first."

"Ah, but your name?"—"That is a secret."

"Not at all. I can consult my programme."

"That won't help you." He laughed lazily. "I just scribbled myself down like a line in Euclid—'A. B.'"

"What a shame! Why is your name a secret?"

"It is not, really. My name is 'Wedderburn.'"

"An odd name. I never heard it before. It is easy to remember. I am glad your name does not begin with a 'B.'"

"Why so?"

"The name I most dislike begins with 'B,'" she said, laughing—"the name of a person I have never seen, and don't want to see."

It was not very difficult to extract from her a little account of her "allotted husband." It greatly amused Mr. Wedderburn.

"I should not care to be the unlucky man when he does appear," he said. "You will make up your mind to dislike him—won't you?"

"I have made up my mind; I do dislike him already."

"I am sorry for him."

"Why? He does not know me; he has never seen me."

"And I never saw you till to-night."

"No. I feel ashamed when I think how quietly I have accepted all your kindness when you are such a stranger."

"When are we to meet again, Miss Northey?" he asked presently.

Hilda paused, astonished.

"To meet again?"

"You seem astonished." He laughed. "I am not well versed in the etiquette of this part of the world. Did you expect me to see you to your carriage, and then turn away and forget you? Do you imagine that I, at my age, would do for every girl I met at a dance what I have done for you to-night?"

"I hoped you were a gentleman, and would help any one in trouble."

"Quite so—if I knew it. But my clairvoyance is limited to a few people. The discoveries I made about you have established a mysterious link of sympathy between us. We must be better acquainted. May I not call on your aunt?"—for Hilda had told him where she lived.

"Impossible!" cried the girl. "I could not tell aunt Fanny what has passed to-night—my foolishness, I mean. And, if I told her a stranger was about to call, she would think me demented."

"Let me see," he said musingly—"what can we do?" Then—"We could not meet anywhere—in the Park, or——"

Hilda's restless movement and haughty aversion of the head made him pause.

"No," he said—"that is manifestly impossible, is it not?"

"I think you might have known it, Mr. Wedderburn."

"I might, certainly. I apologise. Now, here is a brilliant idea. Let me call on Miss Escott and pass myself off as Captain Borodaile!"

Hilda thought he was joking. She laughed merrily.

"Any other suggestion? You are ingenious!" she cried.

"Why, would that not be feasible?"

"Oh, by all means try it! How delightful if you meet the real Captain Borodaile! It would be like a scene in a play!"

"It would amuse you? Very well; I'll try it."

"Certainly. I shall expect you with the greatest eagerness," she laughed.

"Meantime, you will not forget?"

"Even if I were a fashionable society girl, who went to two or three dances a night, I could hardly forget what you have done for me this evening, Mr. Wedderburn."

"I suppose," he said musingly, "that it seems to you very odd that we have become such friends?"

"It seems rather sudden."

"All clairvoyance," he said, toying with her fan. "I knew a great deal about you before I ever saw you. I knew your face quite well."

"Now you are laughing at me."

"I knew that you had an Angora cat which was a great pet of yours; I knew that you greatly longed to have a horse of your own; and when you were told that it could not be afforded, I know how bravely you took your disappointment——"

He broke off. She was staring at him with something very like fear.

"How could you know that?" she said, in a low voice. "Nobody knew about that. I—I am afraid of you!"

"You must not be afraid of me! I am so anxious to be friends. Come—I will put my magic power on one side, and we will dance this last dance together—shall we?"

"What more do you know about me?" she asked in a low voice, as they went off together.

"Something very important. But I shall not tell you to night; we will keep that for my visit to Brook Villa?"

"Ah! As Captain Borodaile?"

"Just so—as Captain Borodaile."

Thus it was that, when Hilda, with tired eyes and drooping flowers, crept into "aunt Fanny's" room to kiss her, and was asked how she had enjoyed herself, her answer was—

"Very much indeed, aunt Fanny!"

She had gone through it all triumphantly. When Leslie Willis escorted Laura to the carriage, Mr. Wedderburn escorted Hilda.

Laura was not in the sweetest frame of mind. She had applied to Mrs. Wade for an introduction to the "catch" of the evening, and he had sent back word that he would be most happy to be presented to Miss Stedman, but had no dances to spare.

As the artist put the irate heiress into her carriage, he knew that his game was won. He had but to call at the Stedmans' on the following evening, and he would be accepted. Pique would finish what jealousy had begun. Laura would do anything to be engaged before her friend.

When the Stedmans had deposited Hilda at the gate of Brook Villa, and were driving to their own home, Miss Stedman laughed a little discordantly.

"Hilda carries it off with a high hand," she said maliciously; "but I know she was ready to cry when Willis never asked her to dance."

"She consoled herself very well," snapped her mother; "for she carried off that Wedderburn 'catch'; and he never so much as looked at you!"

Hilda had expected a sleepless night, but she was disappointed. She fell asleep almost as soon as Atkins had tucked her up in her pretty bed, and never stirred till her breakfast was brought in to her about ten o'clock.

Rather to her chagrin, she found that she did not feel in the least like a love-lorn heroine. Her mind was full of confused dreams about clairvoyance; and the steady honest gaze of a pair of blue eyes would recur to her a great deal oftener than the vision of Leslie Willis' cold faultless face and waving hair. She felt that she would like to meet her new friend again, and she was pretty certain that she would.

She lived through that day and the next in expectation of seeing him, she hardly knew where or when. On the second day came the news of Laura Stedman's engagement to Leslie Willis; and this was certainly a blow.

The artist had taken the young girl's fresh fancy, and such a scattering of illusions was very sad; and she mourned over her broken idol with much bitterness.

If Aunt Fanny noticed the pink and heavy eyelids, she said nothing; and a week went by, during each day of which Hilda's hope of seeing her strange partner again grew fainter.

One day Mrs. Wade called in the brougham, and took her to the Exhibition of Old Masters at Burlington House. This was a little change, and Hilda brightened considerably.

She liked pictures, and she liked Mrs. Wade; and she felt strongly tempted to question her about Mr. Wedderburn, but her natural reticence prevailed. The lady herself did not broach the subject; she merely said—

"I think you must have enjoyed the Vestry Ball, Hilda. And what a charming dress you had. I heard several people praise it."

Hilda smiled shyly, but said nothing.

She was rapidly growing wiser in the ways of the world. Attention from a gentleman at a ball meant nothing—was supposed to mean nothing. Her smile hid some pain, which was perhaps natural. Yet in her ears rang an earnest sentence, accompanied by a steady look from honest blue eyes—

"Did you expect me to see you to your carriage, and then turn away and forget you?'

When she reached home, it was quite dark in the drawing room, and aunt Fanny was dozing over the fire. She awoke with a start as her great-niece entered.

"Well, dear, have you had a nice time to-day?"

"Yes, auntie—a very nice time indeed. Mrs. Wade is very kind."

"Did she mention Laura's engagement?"

"Oh, yes!" she said, smiling. "She had had Mrs. Stedman to see her. She said that Mrs. Stedman seemed a good deal annoyed at discovering that Mr. Willis was almost penniless; but Laura was so self-willed, and would have him,"

"Oh, indeed!" said Miss Escott. "Well, now I have a bit of news for you, child. I had a visitor to-day—a gentleman!"

Hilda's heart gave a great bound

"Who—who was it?" she asked, as calmly as she could.

"Why, really," said the old lady, chuckling, "I think you might guess!"

The eager young heart sank again.

"Not—not my 'futur!"

"Yes, indeed—your 'futur'! There is his card beside you on the tea-tray."

Hilda took up the card and looked idly at it.

"How horrid!" she cried. "Captain Arthur Borodaile! Well, of course it was to be expected. What is he like?"

"Well, I can't say he's handsome," said Miss Escott in a tone that denoted dissatisfaction; "and he hasn't much to say for himself either. But you will be able to form your own judgment—he dines here to-morrow."

"What a bother!" said Hilda. "I shall laugh—I know I shall!"

"You must remember he is your father's friend, dear."

"Dear old father!" said the girl tenderly. "Yes—I forgot that "

She laughed a little as she twisted the card about in her fingers. She was thinking of how Mr. Wedderburn had jestingly suggested that he should personate the Captain.

"It would be rather awkward if he should come now," she reflected; and then suddenly she felt very much ashamed of herself for having been so imprudent as to mention such a subject at all to a complete stranger.

All the next day she was restless and unsettled—she could not apply herself to anything. She had a vague frightened idea that she would have to yield herself up to this Captain Borodaile. She felt as if she had been made over to him, and that he had a kind of right in her.

Atkins dressed her carefully that evening—in white, as usual—and remarked how well she looked when she was ready. The toilette was scarcely completed when the guest punctually arrived, and Atkins had not begun to dress aunt Fanny.

"My dear Hilda, you must go down! I cannot keep him waiting!" cried Miss Escott.

"Go down alone, auntie! To introduce myself to him!" cried Hilda imploringly. "Oh, aunt Fanny! My futur! I can't—and won't!"

"There is no question about it, child—you must!" was the answer, with a sudden quiet assumption of authority which her niece never resisted. "The nonsense we may talk in private has nothing to do with the matter. You are a young gentlewoman, and you must go down and entertain your father's friends."

The girl submitted, but not in a very cordial frame of mind.

The little house looked particularly inviting that evening. Warm curtains drawn across all the doors shut out the biting January cold.

Bright lamps diffused mellow light over the drawing room, with its blazing fire and cozy furniture. Toe Angora cat slumbered on the rug, and Hilda's despised novel lay on the keys of the grand piano.

The waiting guest stood listening, listening, not without eagerness, for an approaching footfall. He could hear only a subdued clink of glass and silver as the busy parlormaid laid the table in the adjoining dining dining room.

Hilda's light step was perhaps for this reason inaudible. He started as the door closed quietly, and a slim white robed girl stood before him in the lamplight.

"I must introduce myself, Captain Borodaile," she began, in rather nervous accents; but then she came to a dead pause, stared violently, stepped back as if not believing the evidence of her senses, and, exclaimed, in tones of agitation, shame, and yet secret triumph too, "You! Oh how could you?"

For it was not the true Captain Borodaile who stood before her; it was Mr. Wedderburn, her partner at the Vestry Ball.

He hastened forward to greet her.

"You are not really angry with me? It was so tempting," he pleaded, as he tried to take her hand.

"How could you do it?" she said, articulating with difficulty, for she was shivering from head to foot. "I am fated to learn the ways of the world in a very hard school, it seems. I admit how foolish, how worse than foolish, I was to confide in you; but I was so unsophisticated—I thought you were a gentleman."

"Do you take such a serious view of it?" he said lightly. "Oh, I think you were wrong! You must forgive me. I wanted so much to see you again; there seemed no other way. I gave Mrs. Wade strong hints. It was of no use; I could get no one to introduce me. Surely my offence is not unpardonable?"

"It's a hard punishment for me!" she said chokingly. "I did not expect it at your hands. Some men, I think, would be clever enough to distinguish—to see the difference between a designing girl and one as ignorant as I.

"Some men — gentlemen — would not have taken advantage of me; but you have not spared me. Your very tone shows that you are treating me as men treat women whom they do not respect. I—I—" —she was struggling with tears—"I think I have not quite deserved to be so humiliated!" she said.

Wedderburn was silent. As he stood there, he hung his head. There was a considerable pause, during which Hilda conquered the weakness which assailed her, and controlled herself by a great effort. At last he said—

"I am ashamed of myself! I can only plead the greatness of the temptation."

"Temptation!" she exclaimed. "What kind of a man, then, are you, to whom it is a temptation to come under false pretences into an unsuspecting old lady's house, and to take advantage of a girl's thoughtless slip? Oh, you reveal your character well when you say that such a practical joke was a great temptation to you!"

"You know I did not mean that, Miss Northey. I meant that I—that my desire to see you again was——"

She stopped him with upraised hand.

'Surely I have said enough for you to know that I am not the kind of woman who receives such compliments," she said haughtily.

"Then," he broke in passionately, "is this folly of mine to cost me everything? Will you never let me see you again, you who only ten days since treated me like a friend? You cannot be so cruel!"

"There is no question of friendship between you and me," she said steadily. "Your own act has shown the sort of acquaintance you desired—underhand, despicable! I think I need detain you no longer. If it is convenient for you to go now, you will set me free to go to Miss Escott, and make confession of the miserable consequences of my childish folly. She must hear everything now." Her lips quivered pitifully. All that folly of hers about Leslie Willis must now be confessed all that she would have died to conceal. It was inevitable; there was no alternative.

Wedderburn however did not take his leave. He walked to the fire, and stood gazing down into it for some moments; then he raised his head and spoke.

"With your permission may I wait to see Miss Escott? I should wish to confess to her myself. I am afraid, if I leave you to do it, you will be blaming yourself too much. I should wish to stay."

"I cannot allow you to stay," she said firmly. "What I have to say to my aunt must be said in private. To have you present would be an unnecessary aggravation of my disgrace."

"Yet you cannot turn me out so, and expect me to slink away like a beaten hound!" he cried indignantly. "Is not that rather too hard? You might allow me to try to justify myself at least."

"You have not pitied me," said Hilda. All the time she had stood immovable. She was like one stricken to the heart.

Wedderburn came up to her and seized her hands.

"I have overshot my mark, I have hurt you more than I meant to, I did not dream of your taking it like this," he said somewhat incoherently.

"Hurt me? Oh, you have—you have!" she cried. "I believed in you. You have hurt me far worse than ever Leslie Willis did. Now go, please. I—I entreat you!" A dry gasping sob escaped her as she snatched her hands from him. "Go away! Do you wish to stay and gloat over my distress?" she cried passionately.

He started away from him and went to the door, then as hurriedly came back.

"Oh, no," he said; "I cannot go away like this—I cannot leave you with such an opinion of me! Where is Miss Escott? Why the deuce can she not come? I never realized how much I am to blame!"

Hilda had sunk into a chair. She gazed bewildered upon the agitated man so near to her. He had knelt down beside her, taking her hand, touching it again and again with warm eager lips.

"You must know I never meant to make you suffer so," he said. "Only wait—let me see Miss Escott! No; don't rise, don't move. I will go to the farthest corner of the room and stay there; I will not annoy you again."

He had hardly done so when the door opened and aunt Fanny entered, radiant in her claret-silk evening gown and lace ruffles, and with her plump hands extended in hospitable greeting.

"What must you think of me? But I dare say you and Hilda have found plenty to talk about?" she began, but paused abruptly, looking from the pale excited girl to the agitated visitor. "No bad news, I hope?" she cried. "Oh, my poor dear, there is no bad news, is there?"

Hilda sprang up. She tried to speak, but could not. Suddenly rushing forward, she flung her arms round her aunt's neck, then darted wildly from the room.

"I will explain everything to you, Miss Escott," her guest said earnestly. "I have been very much to blame, and in playing with edge tools, I fear I have cut myself. But I will confess all my iniquities, and pray for absolution at your hands."

* * * * * *

It was half-past nine, and Hilda wondered more and more why her aunt did not come to her. She had ceased from weeping for an hour past, and was lying forlornly upon the sofa in her bed room, staring at the fire.

"Are you better, my dear child?" she said anxiously.

"No, aunt Fanny. I feel miserable—I feel ashamed to live."

"Oh, come, lovie," said Miss Escott coaxingly; "don't be so down! I think you should go down and see him, you know."

"I will not go down!" cried poor Hilda. "Auntie, what are you dreaming of? A man who has so insulted us—who has treated me as he would a servant girl! And now send me down to talk to him! How can you?"

"Hilda, my dear, you have not usually found your old auntie a fool, have you?"

It took some time to persuade Hilda to face Wedderburn again; but, yielding to her aunt's quiet insistence, she at last consented.

Wedderburn had been straining his ears for the sound of her footsteps, and, when at last she slowly drew near, he uttered a low devout "Thank Heaven!"

"You are good," he said humbly—"you are good indeed to come to me! Your aunt has been so kind and lenient; she said I might plead my own cause."

"I have come only because she sent me," returned Hilda stiffly. "It is quite against my will."

"I am sure it must be," he acknowledged. "Will you sit here and use this foot-stool? Now, first of all, I want to show you something."

Kneeling before her, he drew from his breast-pocket a velvet case. Silently he placed it in her hands.

Opening it, to her astonishment, she saw her own portrait. It was a likeness taken some eighteen months before; and how this copy came into this man's hands was a marvel! As she stared stupidly at it, he began to speak.

"For a year," he said, "I have been in love with that picture. It was given me by the colonel of my regiment—I begged it so hard of him. Day after I used to sit and look at it and wonder, 'Is there really such a woman as this in the world? Or is she merely a beautiful lie—a fair mask, with nothing behind?'

"And every day I believed more and more that such an expression could never be borne by a woman without a soul; and everything in me cried out, 'Go and find her! See her—win her, if you can!' So I started for England. All through my long voyage my picture confronted me. But, when I was actually in London, with its hordes of commonplace people, I felt that I was losing faith in my ideal. The girls I met were shallow and worldly; my friends all told me that English girls were deteriorating.

"Suppose my pictured love was one of these? I said 'I will see her just as she is. I will have no special introduction. She shall meet me as one of the crowd, and, if I make no impression at the first meeting, I will go away again and leave my romance unwritten.' I was alarmed at the strength of my own feeling the night I was to meet her first. It was at a ball, and, when first I saw her she stood on the stairs—wide red stairs—all in white, with her head raised and floods of light streaming upon her. She was far, far more lovely than I had ever dreamed! They told me she was much admired by one who was there that night——"

"Oh, don't—no more!" Hilda broke in suddenly. "You are speaking in riddles. Tell me plainly who you are! Are you Captain Borodaile?"

"I was when I started from Calcutta; but, through the death of my uncle, I am now Lord Wedderburn, so I was not lying when I told you my name at the ball."

"Oh, how could you act so—to talk of Captain Borodaile?"

Hilda faltered, hiding her face in her hands.

She heaved a long wondering sigh.

"I—I—— Oh, I feel different!" she whispered. "A load is gone from my heart. Yes, yes—I forgive you!"

"Say—'Arthur, I forgive you.'"

She hesitated—trembled—crimsoned. He waited. At that moment the rustle of "Aunt Fanny's" silk was heard as she approached the drawing room. Two shy warm hands were thrust confidingly into his, and two soft dark eyes glanced into his as Hilda whispered hastily—

"Arthur, I forgive you!"

* * * * * *

Mr. and Mrs. Leslie Willis are not upon Lord and Lady Wedderburn's visiting list. Nor are Mr. Leslie Willis' pictures to be found hanging in the Academy Exhibition—either on the line or off it. Perhaps this failure of his is the result of having plenty of money; but it is a source of keen mortification to his ambitious and jealous wife.

At Home and Abroad.

In Eastern Australia a hundred million sheep and great herds of cattle and horses now feed upon pastures covering flat grounds which thirty years ago was a desert of soft sand, so "rotten" that the feet sank at every step. This once worthless ground has been beaten into compact soil by the feet of the sheep and cattle, and it is believed that other great desert expanses in Australia may be turned into productive pasture, and in a similar manner.

Ardcanny, County Limerick, saw a curious eviction recently. The Anglican rector of the place had been proved guilty of heresy by the General Synod of the Church of Ireland and had been ordered to give up his living. He refused, hoisted the Union Jack over the rectory, nailed protests against the way he was treated to the outer walls, barricaded the house, and declared he would resist. The Sheriff and his bailiff, however, got in through the window, when the clergyman quietly walked out of the front door, with a black bag on one shoulder and a parcel of books under the other arm.

A novel point in that part of international law that deals with the exterritoriality of foreign embassies has just been decided in the Berlin Sheriff's Court. A parrot belonging to the Japanese Embassy escaped from its cage and took refuge on a high tree in a garden next door. To get it down some of the Embassy servants played on the bird with a garden hose, and drenched at the same time the owner of the garden, who happened to be sitting under the tree. He brought suit for trespass and received 20 marks damages, the injury having been inflicted on German soil, though the perpetrators had not left Japanese territory.

STATE OF OHIO, CITY OF TOLEDO, } ss.
LUCAS COUNTY

FRANK J. CHENEY makes oath that he is the senior partner of the firm of F. J. CHENEY & Co., doing business in the City of Toledo, County and State aforesaid, and that said firm will pay the sum of ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS for each and every case of Catarrh that cannot be cured by the use of HALL'S CATARRH CURE. FRANK J. CHENEY.

Sworn to before me and subscribed in my presence, this 6th day of December, A. D. 1886.

SEAL } A. W. GLEASON, Notary Public.

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Our Young Folks.

TOSTY NOSE.

BY C. M. M.

"A PENNY for your thoughts, my son," said Mrs. Piggie to her first-born, as he stood on two legs, leaning over the sty, gazing across the sunny yard.

"Hunk-hunk-hunk! I was thinking of the Man in Blue."

"The Man in Blue! What were you thinking of him?" asked Mrs. Piggie with a whine, turning a shade paler—if it is possible for a spotted pig with a white face to turn paler.

"Well, I were wishing he'd choose me to go back with him the next time he comes."

"Oh! my son, are you mad?" shrieked Mrs. Piggie, holding up her cloven-hoofed fore-feet in alarm.

"No, mother; everybody says it's a very fine thing to go with the Man in Blue."

"My son, 'tis said, 'everybody never did speak the truth,' you know," returned Piggie's mother.

"They who told me that did, mother," said he, looking round over his shoulder; "they said, they who go with the Man in Blue see life, which one never will in this humdrum place; and I want to go, and shall, too, if I'm chosen," went on undutiful Piggie, and down came his fore-legs flump into the sty; "and I think I shall be."

"What makes you think you will?" whined his mother.

"Because he patted me last time, and said I should make a splendid porker—splendid, mother; think of that!" And Piggie chuckled till his small eyes were fairly hidden in his fat cheeks.

"Oh, my son, to go with the Man in Blue isn't the life you dream of. Your father had just such—such aspirations as you," said Mrs. Piggie, bringing out a grand word with a choking sound in her throat.

"Tell me about father, mother; I never heard the rights of the story," grunted her ambitious son; and down he sat, tucking his scrap of a tail waggishly after him.

"It's a sad tale, my son," sighed his mother. "He went with the Man in Blue, and—and——"

"And what, mother?"

"He never came back."

"Is that all?" asked Piggie.

His mother nodded.

"It isn't much," said Piggy disdainfully.

"It's made a lifetime of trouble for me," grunted his mother.

"Well, my story wont be like that. I shall come back, you'll see, and surprise you all."

"Why not be content with your lot here, like Spot, Twisty-tail and Squeakie?" reasoned his mother.

Master Piggie rose, and leant over the sty again, glancing across the yard to where three frolicsome pigs were amusing themselves by poking their noses among the straw which the farm men called muckle—burrowing out tunnels in it, and running through them; sometimes tossing the straw over each other, as in wild sport.

"They! I should never be content to be like them," scoffed their brother, with a toss of his nose; and down he dropped into the sty, thrust his hands—fore-feet, I mean—into his pockets, and strolled out into the yard.

"Look at Tosty-nose!" laughed some of the waggish young pigs, playing a round game of their own, seeing the small, fat, conceited young fellow coming, and winking and blinking at him from afar, with the most comical air imaginable.

They had given him the name of Tosty-nose, because he carried his nose so high in the air, and his two sisters called him by it—just for fun, so they told him with saucy squeaks, and ran to quarters when he chased them for it.

"Father had such a jolly time with the Man in Blue, that he never cared to come back; of course, it was selfish of him to cause mother so much trouble; but I'll never do that—I'll come back, just to show her that I was right in going away, and to let her see how grand I've grown," mused he, and stood to watch his three little sisters at their play.

"Well enough for them—sisters are always stay-at-home things; but I must and will see the world," grunted he to himself.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Piggie had thrown off her apron—for she was in the midst of tidying up the sty and making the beds—to run across to her neighbor, named Mrs. Bristle because of her rough back; but she had a soft heart, and—well, she was a mother.

"Well, I never!" cried she, sitting in her sty, and Mrs. Piggie leaning over it, pouring out her troubles with many a whine and grunt; "well, I never."

Then all the ducks came up to hearken, for they saw and heard that something was amiss.

Well, ducks never could keep a secret, and soon the whole farmyard knew it, even to the geese, and they were down in the meadow; and they all came trooping up, led by a wise old duck, to persuade wilful Tosty-nose to think better of his wild-goose chase, as the old duck quacked it out; and then hid her head under her wing, in shame at what the geese would think of her slip of the tongue. But old Rover, the house-dog, had had his say with Tosty-nose before they came up.

"Why, my son, what is this I hear about you?" said he, going up to him in a grandfatherly way, and laying his paws on Piggie's back. But he shook them off.

"I mean to go with the Man in Blue, if that's what you've heard!" was the reply; and he was walking on, but Rover pinned him.

"And see, yonder's your mother breaking her heart over it," said the faithful old dog.

"Oh, she'll tell another tale," grunted the other, "when I come back, the—the——"

"The what?" barked Rover kindly.

"The envy of all the other pigs in the yard."

"My son, believe me, there's no coming back for those who go with the Man in Blue."

So far had Rover got in his kindly-meant persuasion, when up came the geese, led by Mother Duck, as some called her.

"Oh, Tosty-nose, hear reason!" quacked she as spokeswoman. The dog had walked on.

"And stay at home!" shrieked the geese, like a chorus to the other, stretching out their necks.

"Hunk-hunk!" grunted Tosty-nose, "who are you? Only a pack of silly geese, all noise and little else. And Mother Duck ——"

But the foremost goose cut him short by hissing in his face.

"Begging your pardon," she said, "our noise, as you call it, once saved a city."

"Faugh! who cares for ancient things?" grunted disdainful Piggie, "I'm for what is new, and——"

"And for being blind to what is for your good," brayed a donkey.

"You must be deaf, to make that sound," scoffed Tosty-nose.

"He who blindly courts his fate,
Often rues it when too late."

crowed Chanticleer that same afternoon.

"Fate!" grunted he, "I'm not courting fate, but fortune;" and he ran off.

"My mind is made up, mother," said he moodily, as his mother sat wiping her eyes.

"Just your father's words, sonnie! Why will you court his fate?" cried she.

"Fate! It's not fate, but fortune I'm after—just the word Old Chanticleer crowed in my face this afternoon."

His mother said no more, and, on the morrow, fate, or fortune, came to him: the Man in Blue drove up, and chose him the very first to go with him.

It was all done as in a moment: being tossed up the cart with many others who squeaked while he chuckled, good byes were grunted through the net spread over them, sobs and whines from those left behind.

The last thing Tosty-nose saw was his mother sobbing on Mrs. Bristle's shoulder, and then they were off.

"Mother, mother, mother!" squeaked the three little sisters, a few days after, bursting into the sty one over the other, "Mr. Rover is going to town with master, and perhaps he may see our Tosty-nose."

"He might." So Mrs. Piggie grunted across the yard to him, and he came.

Yes, he was going to town.

"Our love to Tosty-nose, if you see him; and tell him I shall watch the yard-gates till he comes back."

"Then you'll have to watch a long time," muttered Rover to himself, walking away, after promising to give the message.

"What about Tosty-nose?" screamed the geese, as he took the short cut through the meadow home.

"It's a bad business. I shall never tell what I've seen and heard," said Rover. 'Keep my secret, and prove that you are not what he called you."

"Maybe he'd not call us silly now," hissed one—but Rover was gone.

"I never saw him, I heard a good account of him; he's the best porker in the town," said the kindly dog, as the fond mother waited for him, her head over the sty.

"What's the meaning of 'porker?'" grunted she.

"It means, he's got to the top of the tree—the best character, and the best place in the town for a young pig," barked Rover, and walked away.

"Dear, dear! our Tosty-nose got to be all that so soon: I shall be the happiest pig alive when he comes back," grunted Mrs. Piggie to herself.

But Rover never told what he saw and heard.

WOMEN THAN CUCKOOS.—Stealthily and silently the cow bird among the thickets follows the trail of the warbler, sparrow or thrush like a sleuth hound. Yonder a tiny yellow red bird with a jet black cheek flits hither with a wisp of dry grass in its beak and disappears in the branches of a small tree close by my studio door. Like the shadow of fate, the cow bird suddenly appears, and has doubtless ferreted out her cradle.

In a certain grass bank not far from where I am writing, at the foot of an unsuspecting fern, a song sparrow has built her nest.

It lies in the hollow among the dried leaves and grass, and is so artfully merged with its immediate surroundings that even though you know its precise location it eludes you.

Only yesterday the last finishing touches were made upon these, and this morning, as I might have anticipated from the excess of lisp and twitter of the mother bird, I find the first pretty brown spotted egg.

Surely our cow bird has missed this secret haunt in her rounds. Be not deceived. Within a half hour after the egg was laid the sparrow and its mate, returning from a brief absence to view their prize, discovered two eggs where they had been responsible for but one.

The prowling foe had already discovered their secret, for she, too, is "an attendant on the spring," and had been simply biding her time.

The parent birds once out of sight, she had stolen quietly upon the nest, and after a very brief interval had as slyly retreated, leaving her questionable compliments, presumably with a self-satisfied chuckle.

The intruded egg is so like its fellow as to be hardly distinguishable except in its slightly larger size. It is doubtful whether the sparrow, in particular, owing to its similarity, ever realizes the deception.

Indeed, the event is possibly considered the cause of self-congratulation rather than otherwise—at least until her eyes are opened by the fateful document of a few weeks later.

And thus the American cow bird outcuckoos the cuckoo as an "attendant on the spring," taking her pick among the nurseries of featherdom, and victimizing the oriole by a brief sojourn in the swinging hammock in the elm, then stopping a moment to leave her charge to the care of the indigo bird, to-morrow creeping through the grass to the secret nest of the Maryland yellow throat, or Wilson's thrush, or chewink.

And, unaccountable as it may appear, here we find the same deadly token safely lodged in the dainty cobweb nest of the vireo, a fragile pendant hung in the fork of a slender branch, which in itself would barely appear sufficiently strong to suspend the weight of a cow bird without emptying the nest.

NOT WHAT THEY EXPECTED.—Burglars make a mistake when they tackle a physician's house. One broke into a London doctor's consulting room a short time ago, and the doctor threw at him the first thing he could lay his hands on.

It happened to be a bottle of oil of peppermint, which caught the thief in the neck and broke. The thief got away, but the next day the police sniffed at every suspicious character they met, and soon secured their man.

Twenty-four hours later when arraigned in court, he still reeked of the peppermint. Not many weeks previously another thief was discovered by a physician in his room.

The doctor pretended that he thought the intruder was a new patient come for a consultation, and thumped and pounded him for ten minutes in the most professional manner, pronounced him perfectly sound, and charged him five dollars.

THE WORLD'S HAPPENINGS.

Bicycles are taxed in France.

Fiji is the only British colony in which the natives pay their taxes in kind—chiefly in cocoanuts.

In St. Petersburg only 32 per cent. of the inhabitants were born in the city; in Paris, 36 per cent.; Berlin, 41; Vienna, 45, and London, 65

Japan is filled from end to end with all the apparatus of the latest civilization, down to the electric car and the international exhibition.

There are 5600 distilleries in the United States. North Carolina leads, with 1624, and Virginia is next, with 1351. Pennsylvania has 139

By the last census there were 73,045 paupers in the United States, of whom 40,741 were men and 32,304 were women. This embraced only those who were inmates of almshouses.

There are, on the average, nine times as many death from typhoid fever in the large cities of the United States as in the many Germany cities that have secured a purified water supply.

Red irritates oxen because it is the complementary color to green, and the eyes of cattle being fixed so much on herbage, anything red impresses their sight with hugely increased intensity.

It is found that bacteria are readily taken up by ice in freezing. Chicago has passed a rigid ordinance forbidding the cutting of ice within three miles of any town or city of over 20 000 inhabitants.

A new French coin will shortly be issued—a nickel piece of 25 centimes (5 cents). It will be found most useful, as at present there is no coin between the half-franc and the 10 centime or 2-cent piece.

The law enacted at the last session of the Vermont Legislature stopping the payment of bounties on all noxious animals will go into effect February 1, 1897. Bears, foxes, lynxes, etc., are included in this list.

At the beginning of the present century the Bible could be studied by only one-fifth of the earth's population. Now it is translated into languages which make it accessible to nine-tenths of the world's inhabitants.

Of all the cities New York has the largest number of Irish, 190,418; of Germans, 210,723; of Russians, 63,790, and of Italians, 39,-951. The children born of foreign parents in this country are not included.

The proprietors of an English medical nostrum announce that on a certain day they will send up a balloon over London from which a number of checks will be thrown, varying in value from $5 to $50, which will be cashed at the office of the concern.

In the Abbey of Cwm Hir, supposed to be the resting place of the last native Prince of Wales, an ivy stem three inches in diameter is found to have raised a stone column and to have pulled it two and one-half inches away from the wall to which it belongs.

The new rural mail delivery in Cumberland county, Me., has brought out some queer mail boxes. A half-bushel basket, a big coffee can, soap and spice boxes, and even receptacles that have once held patent medicines, are among those that grace one neighborhood.

Careful weighing shows that an ordinary bee, not loaded, weighs the five thousandth part of a pound, so that it takes 5000 bees to make a pound. But the loaded bee, when he comes in fresh from the fields and flowers, freighted with honey or bee-bread, weighs nearly three times more.

A German court has decided that electricity cannot be stolen. A man was arrested on the charge of having stolen several thousand amperes of current by tapping a light company's mains and using it to run a motor. The Court, on appeal, ruled that "only a movable material object" could be stolen, which electricity was not, and therefore the man was acquitted

There is so remarkable an inter-relationship of families in Powell county, Ky., that on the trial of a case in the Circuit Court, when the Judge asked the jurymen if any of them were related to the plaintiff or defendant nearly the entire panel rose and left the box. The Boones, who trace their descent from the great bear slayer, are among these families.

There are 119,000,000 old copper pennies somewhere. Nobody knows what has become of them, except once in a while a single specimen turns up in change. A few years ago 4,500,000 bronze 2 cent pieces were set afloat. Three millions of these are still outstanding. Three million 3 cent nickel pieces are scattered over the United States, but it is very rarely that one is seen.

The best briar root from which pipes are made comes from the borders of France and Italy. In the mountainous districts of those countries roots are dug out which have grown for ages, and are sometimes larger than a man's body, weighing hundreds of pounds. The wood thus obtained is remarkably beautiful. These large deposits of the root have been just discovered in France, and the price may be brought down in time. At present a good briar root pipe is not cheap.

NIGHT.

BY W. W. L.

Night comes up from the sea,
The winds and waters moan;
Here in the desolate dark
I wander all alone.

Night comes over the land,
There is never a star on high;
And the ghosts of my lonely life
In the darkness wander by.

VISITING CARDS.

There is a certain connection between the custom of New Year calls and visiting cards. Now the visiting card as we know it is barely a century old. Like most other every-day articles of use and ornament, it is the result of a gradual process of evolution; and the form which the card now universally takes is by no means so attractive as those which it took in some of the earlier stages of its history.

Of late years, indeed, there have been whispers of a new departure in cards. A revolt from the prevailing monotony in "paste-boards" has more than once been threatened; and the great army of those who suffer from collector-mania have been tantalized with the prospect of new worlds to conquer, in the shape of visiting cards ornamented with elaborately engraved devices.

The idea of those who mooted the change was to give to the visiting card a touch of individuality, so that each card, like a book-plate, should be a witness to its owner's individual taste and inclinations, and not a mere machine-made reproduction of a universal pattern. But nothing came of the proposal, and the present-day visiting card still wears its uniform of plain black and white. Had the proposed change been carried out, however, it would simply have been a revival of a fashion that prevailed a little more than a hundred years ago.

Visiting cards were a development from the old style of message and invitation cards. Throughout the greater part of the last century it was customary to write messages and invitations on the backs of used playing cards. The particular card used was often chosen at random; but occasionally it was picked out with an eye to the delicate suggestiveness of some one suit.

One of the many stories that are told to account for the name of "Curse of Scotland," which is given to the nine of diamonds, attributes its origin to the alleged action of the Duke of Cumberland in writing his cruel order, refusing all quarter to the defeated Highlanders after Culloden, on the back of this particular card. But as the term was in use before the battle of Culloden was fought, the explanation can hardly be true.

Much earlier the Irish name for the six of hearts—the "Grace card"—is said to have had its origin in a message written thereon. The tradition goes that a gentleman of Kilkenny, named Grace, was being strongly urged by a representative of Marshal Schomberg to declare for William of Orange and against James II. The marshal's emissary in his master's name made lavish promises of future rewards; but the Irish gentleman wrote the following answer on the back of the six of hearts: "Tell your master I despise his offer, and that honor and conscience are dearer to a gentleman than all the wealth and titles a prince can bestow."

An amusing example of the use of cards for messages can be seen in the fourth plate of Hogarth's "Marriage a la Mode," which dates from 1745. In a corner of the picture are several playing cards lying on the floor, with inscriptions which show a considerable devotion to phonetic principles of spelling on the part of the fashionable world of that day. One bears the following: "Count Basset begs to no how Lade Squander sleapt last nite." Another has: "Lady Squander's company is desir'd at Miss Hairorane's Rout."

Sometimes the backs of playing cards which were used for invitations and similar purposes were elaborately engraved. The writer of a once well-known book called the "Spiritual Quixote," published in 1772, speaks of the use of playing cards for the sending of messages as a new fashion; but it is clear from what has been already stated that they had been in common use for at least thirty or forty years.

A curious survival of this custom was observed in the island of Madeira some years ago. A visitor who was staying in that delightful isle about 1865 recorded that the invitations given by the bishop for the Easter ceremonies in the cathedral of Funchal were written on the backs of playing cards.

From the use of such cards simply for invitations and other messages it was an easy transition to their use for visiting purposes. At first the person who so used them simply wrote his name across the back of a card. Dr. Doran, in one of his pleasant books of gossip, declares that it was in Paris, about the year 1770, that the custom was introduced of visiting en blanc, as it was called, that is by leaving a card. Old-fashioned folks, he says, who loved to visit in state and display their costumes, called this fashion fantastic, and strongly opposed it. But, of course, opposition of this kind was bound to fail. The ceremonious leaving of a card as equivalent to a visit may have begun in 1770, but the writing of the name on a card and leaving it when the person called upon was not at home was certainly practised somewhat earlier.

Writing the name on the back of a card was soon found to be too simple a matter, and it became the practice to write the name either on the backs of playing cards, or on the face of cards adorned with engraved devices. Classical ruins and the like designs were highly fashionable.

Cards so engraved appear to have been sold in packs, with assorted views; for two or more cards have been found bearing the same name written across them, but with quite different pictures as backgrounds. The practice of writing the name seems to have been soon superseded by engraving the name as well as the background.

BUT HE GOT IN.—Most of the houses in Greenland are entered through a passage constructed below the level of the ground. It is so long and narrow that one has to crawl one's way along it, and an unusually stout man finds it hard to get in at all. Nansen mentions the case of a fat storekeeper of Godthaab, who stuck fast in such a passage, unable, despite all his struggling and bellowing, to advance or retreat. At last four boys came to his help, two from the house dragging him inward and two from the outside pushing behind. For a long time no progress was made, and it was being proposed to pull down the walls in order to set him free, when, with a last despairing effort he managed to squeeze himself through. A window of the house was removed to let him out.

Grains of Gold.

When men begin drinking, they generally stop thinking.

Looking a difficulty square in the face, will often kill it dead.

The world has learned more from its poor, than it has from its kings.

From the standpoint of the bulldog, this is a very quarrelsome world.

The man who robs another of his rights, loses most by the transaction.

If we see nothing good in others, they will not be likely to see much good in us.

We would all have less cause to blame others, if we had fewer faults of our own.

Not until we know a man's heart, have we any right to say that we know him.

Go forth with a smile on your face, and you will return bellowing that most people are good natured. Wear a frown, and you will find plenty of quarrelsome people.

Femininities.

A woman, the manager of one of the leading insurance companies in California, receives $10,000 a year.

She: I understand you proposed to Emily while out for a stroll last night? He: Yes; I won in a walk.

Clara: Sadie must have been talking about me. Maude: Why so? Clara: When I met her she kissed me twice.

A.: Miss Octave is a beautiful player. B.: You mean she plays beautifully? A.: No—that's exactly what I don't mean.

When a woman gets a letter why does she always stop before she opens it and say: "Now, I wonder who this is from?"

In one of Boston's busiest thoroughfares there is a sign which reads: "Cole & Wood, Dealers in Wood and Coal."

Mr. Wigwag: You're forgotten your pocketbook. Mrs. Wigwag: Oh, that doesn't make any difference; I'm only going out shopping.

President Kruger has the same number of grandchildren as Queen Victoria, but they are not sprinkled over the thrones of Europe.

"No, Willie dear," said Willie's mamma—"no more cakes to-night. Don't you know you cannot sleep on a full stomach?" "Well," replied Willie, "I can sleep on my back."

Mamma: Ethel, what do you mean by shouting in that disgraceful fashion? See how quiet Willie is. Ethel: Of course he's quiet. That's in our play. He's papa coming home late, and I'm you!

"Why do you look so gloomy, Tomkins?" "You know my best girl is one of those new women? Well, I'm puzzled to decide whether I ought to ask her to marry me or wait for her to propose."

Paris is the paradise of the dressmaker. There are in the city 79,000 persons who make articles of women's dress and 65,000 dressmakers. It has been estimated that the yearly amount earned in this business there is over $250,978,000.

Professor in English, to young man: How would you punctuate the following: "The beautiful girl, for such she was, was passing down the street?" Student: I think, sir, I would make a dash after the beautiful girl.

A lady, on her homeward journey from India with half a dozen others, discovered a means of making the Bay of Biscay endurable. This was to sit upon newspapers and "toboggan" up and down the saloon, deriving the impetus from the motion of the ship.

"I love to hear you talk, my dear," said Mr. Stokers to his wife, when she paused to take breath at the end of the second column of a curtain lecture, "but your volubility is really a reflection on my wisdom." "How so?" "Because a word to the wise is sufficient."

One of the deer licenses issued in Kalkaska county, Michigan, this year, was taken out by a woman, Mrs. George Heisel. Although well along in years, she camps out every fall with her husband during the deer hunting season, and is as handy with the gun, as well as the fish rod, as most men are.

She was a spinster from the country, come to the city to see the sights, and, as she watched the hundreds of the opposite sex hurrying along the streets, she stood lost in wonderment. "Well, well!" she said, at length, drawing a deep breath, and gazing wistfully around. "To think that there should be all these men in the world and yet I can't get one of them for a husband!"

Almer's (the Swiss mountain guide) 70th birthday, has just been celebrated at Grindelwald. He is the hero of over 200 first ascents, including the Matterhorn, the Eiger, the Schreckhorn and the Moench on the Wengern Alp. He is the only man that ever came down alive from the last peak. He has five sons, all well-known guides, who have been employed in climbs in the Caucasus and the Himalayas. His career ended ten years ago, when he lost all his toes during an ascent of the Jungfrau in January.

For the first time on record the full military honors have been accorded by the English army authorities at the funeral of a Roman Catholic Sister of Mercy. The woman in question had succumbed to infectious pneumonia while nursing a soldier in the Government hospital at Gibraltar, and she was borne to her grave on a gun carriage, followed by the General in command of the colony, with all his staff, as well as by detachments of every regiment of the garrison, while three volleys were fired over her grave.

They were Americans, and they had ribbons all over their luggage, and the young woman's back hair sparkled with rice. The railway porter approached the happy looking young man, and said:

"Dah's a present foh you, wif de compliments eb de road."

"What is it?"

"A map and a time-table."

"Ah, thank you! And what are these marks in blue pencil?"

"Dem is de impohtant paht, sah. Dey shows jes' whah de tunnels is."

Masculinities.

An exchange announces on the death of a lady that "she lived fifty years with her husband, and died in confident hope of a better life."

Miss West-end: And can you always judge of a man's character by the way he laughs? Social philosopher: Oh, no; not by the way he laughs, by what he laughs at.

Arizona convicts have been leased for ten years at 70 cents per head a day. Their labor is to be used in constructing an irrigating canal to reclaim 100,000 acres of arid land.

Miss Sharpe, encouragingly: Your step suits mine exactly, Mr. Robinson. Mr. Robinson, nervously: So delighted to hear you say so, Miss Sharpe! I know I'm such a wretched waltzer.

Major McKinley will succeed the twenty-third man who has held the office of President of the United States, but his administration will be the thirty second in the history of the country.

Sunday school teacher, speaking of the conscience: After you have done something which you ought not to do, what is it, Bobby, that makes you feel so uncomfortable and unhappy? Bobby: Pa.

Mr. Frank B. Many, an official of the Valley Railroad, says 750,000 people visited Major McKinley during the recent campaign, and they paid on an average over one dollar each in railroad fares.

Judge: And now, my good man, what made you kiss this lady? Cunning culprit: Your honor, my inherited love of beauty. Miss Passe: Judge—er—I do not think I'll prosecute any further.

She: I don't believe that Charley is a flirt. Why, he told me last night that, in all his life, he had never kissed a girl once. He: I don't doubt it. To kiss a girl once wouldn't be Charley's style at all.

Great actress: Oh, Mr. De Stage, we can't play to-night. Traveling manager: Why not? Actress: Our trunks haven't arrived, and we haven't a thing to wear. Manager: That's all right. I'll put on a burlesque.

She, blushing slightly: "Do you know, George, I've heard it said that in ancient times kissing a pretty girl was a cure for a headache." "A headache is something I've never had," he said, with monumental stupidity.

Brown: You look as if you had the blues. Robinson: So I have. I've lost my beautiful new silk umbrella. Brown: Where did you leave it? Robinson: I didn't leave it anywhere. The owner met me and took it away from me.

Colonel Robert M. Douglas, the eldest son of the late Stephen A. Douglas, is one of the Republican candidates in North Carolina who were successful at the recent election. He has been elected to a Judgeship of the State Court, and will take office on January 1.

It was once told to a certain King of England that Lord Blank was his politest subject. "I will test him," said the king, and showed Lord Blank to the royal carriage, holding the door for him to enter first, which he did. "You are right," said the king; "a lesser man would have troubled me with ceremony."

"I am not pleased with your selections. You play too much dirge music," said a manager to the leader of an orchestra; "besides, your men don't play with any larrup-tarrup. You need more guff." The leader has ever since been trying to find out the meaning of the novel music terms used by his manager.

According to figures set forth in a Madrid dispatch, Guerrin, the king of the torreadors, earned $61,300 in the past season of seven months. During that time over 6000 horses and bulls to the value of $800,000 were butchered in order to furnish entertainment on Spanish holidays, while the number of persons killed or crippled exceeded in number the bulls that entered the arena.

Two well-known members of the Irish Bar of the day, Doyle and Yelverton, were arguing, and—a not unusual circumstance in the Emerald Isle—from words they came to blows. Doyle, being the more powerful of the two men, knocked the other down, exclaiming, in the greatest excitement, "You scoundrel! I'll make you behave yourself like a gentleman!" Yelverton, on rising, replied with equal vehemence, "No, sir—never! I defy you! You could not do it!"

Count Von Waldersee, who, rumor persists in declaring, is to succeed Prince Hohenlohe as the Imperial Chancellor of Germany, has an American wife. Her father was once a wholesale grocer in New York city. As Mary Esther Lee she went to Europe, and when she married Prince Von Noer, in 1864, she had won the reputation of being the handsomest and most accomplished woman in Paris. She was twenty-six then and the prince was nearly seventy. The prince died in six months, leaving her a fortune estimated at $4,000,000. The Emperor of Austria thereupon created her a princess in her own right. Two years later Princess Von Noer married Count Von Waldersee, who is only six years her senior. During the short reign of Emperor Frederick she acquired great influence at the German court, and has retained a very high standing at Berlin.

Latest Fashion Phases.

With the new year of course there comes renewed interest in the fashions. And furs in particular call for attention.

Chinchilla, being a close fur, is used quite often this winter as tight eton shaped jackets, with sleeves of the same or velvet. Seal is also frequently re made in this style, but fur seal garments are made like this. Seal is very dear this season, and beaver is nearly all gone, so that is practically out of consideration.

Persian is not very popular. Astrakhan in the waved moire quality is even better liked than it was last year, and many most elegant garments are made of it. Indeed, in some cases entire suits, coat and skirt, are made of this, but it is too heavy for comfort in a skirt.

One pretty and useful fancy often seen, too, these cold days, is the closed eton jacket made of astrakhan. This is made with three pieces in the back, the seams being defined. The front closes with black silk crocheted buttons. Some close quite to the neck. Others have revers, and in that way a small triangular opening at the neck.

This is filled, according to the taste of the wearer, with a white collar and chemisette or a full silk or velvet vest, with a frill at the top. All have sleeves of astrakhan in the leg o' mutton shape. Well, not quite all, for some have velvet sleeves, though these are few.

Wherever it is possible, those who wear the astrakhan etons have a band of the same fur around the bottom of the dress or down the front side seams, and often a bit is added to the hat. A very taking jacket of this style had the vest filled in with cherry velvet and a standing plaiting of the same at the neck. These jackets harmonize with all kinds of winter materials and colors.

There is another style of an astrakhan coat, perhaps more stylish than the other. This has the front slashed, so that it forms a tight vest of the fur and a short box coat in one. The division is made at the bust line three inches from the opening. It closes with hooks and eyes. The box coat part hangs straight from the neck in the back and rest of the front two inches below the waist line. It was lined with brown taffeta. All around the bottom there were lace applications in dark cream point de gene, and a zigzag of narrower design passed across the bust and brown to the point of the vest. The high flaring collar was of the fur, with a plaiting of lace on the inside and a small jabot at the neck. There were gigot sleeves with turn-up cuffs and a medium-sized muff to match. This jacket would please many women better than the plainer eton.

Fur, lace and decorative buttons are as much seen on children's garments as on those of their mother. Beading, narrow valenciennes lace gathered into ruffles, fine velvet bands, medallion applications of lace and similar adornments are employed for guimpes, yokes and collars without reserve. Costumes of velvet, bordered with fur, in which the neck is low and the sleeves are short, to display a guimpe, are very fashionable, and lace and fur together are also used for the juvenile wardrobe. Guipure and renaissance or Richelieu lace serves for all sorts of decorations, square berthas, large Louis III collars and dalmatics, the latter partly composed of batiste, and jabots crossing the bodice diagonally.

Besides cloth and thick woolen goods, which are the chief materials for children's out of door wear, exceedingly rich goods are employed. Soft, heavy silk, velvet and plush—but less plush than velvet in all its varieties—are used for indoor frocks, and not only are these mature fabrics favored for young folks, but even grown up styles and shapes are copied in miniature. The princess gown, for example, which is again in vogue, and which requires a fully developed figure within it if it is to be effective, is now made for children's wear. No one can doubt that loose clothing is much prettier for little ones and more becoming to them than tight garments, but we must have change, of course, even if it is a change for the worst.

The sailor costume in all varieties remains in favor for little boys. For those yet in skirts there are gay highland suits, consisting of a bright kilt, velvet jacket and plaid scarf crossing the jacket diagonally. Of course a Scotch cap accompanies the suit.

For the first two years of life boys and girls are dressed alike, without any special distinction, as they are simply babies. White is their preferred wear for frocks, coats, hats and even shoes. Cloth, lamb's wool, white astrakhan, flannel, ermine, serve for outside wear, while dresses are of serge, cashmere, nun's veiling or flannel. White felt hats are worn, or hoods of white silk.

Small capes and large collars of fur are worn in profusion. They are much rippled and ornamented with ruches, clusters of tails, animal heads and lace.

Smooth cloth is having a great success this winter. There are also thick woolen goods in fancy weaves and mixed colors. Bouretts or hairy, shaggy fabrics are in good demand for fashionable gowns. Among the novelties are worsted materials of rather loose weave, having metallic threads run in at close intervals, generally in an irregular manner. Another novelty is a silk and wool check in which the squares of wool rest upon a silk ground.

Moire, especially moire antique, is used in great quantities both in evening and day shades. The moire at present prevailing has a novel peculiarity. While presenting every appearance of being silk, even to being of the usual silk width, it yet contains a slight admixture of wool, which gives it a spring and body that pure silk moire does not possess. Silk and wool goods are having an immense vogue this season, but few of the new materials created to meet the demand can be more satisfactory than this silk and wool moire. It composes charming evening gowns, and it is to be found in all shades. The indispensable black skirt is also now made of it perferably, although broche and damask silks are also used.

If the bodice differing from the skirt is not as prominent as it was a year ago it is nevertheless still worn on suitable occasions—in the house, for the theater and on small evening occasions. It now usually repeats the color of the skirt in some of its accessories, however.

Odds and Ends.

SOMETHING IN THE WAY OF HOUSEHOLD HINTS.

If the hands are stained with fruit juice, do not wash them in hot water and soap, but only rinse in cold water, when the stains will disappear.

The best way to light a kitchen fire, is to pack the coals and cinders carefully and closely, and then light it on the top with a fire wheel or wood and a little small coal. This will then burn downwards and make a glowing fire which will need no further attention for a long time. If the bottom of the grate is not fitted with a shaped piece of tin or iron to stop the bottom draught, a piece of brown paper should be cut to shape and put in position before the coals are laid.

To cut a piece of India rubber easily, wet the knife with water before using it.

Whalebone may be easily cut if warmed first over a lamp glass or by the fire, when it will become quite soft.

To remove fruit stains from linen, pour boiling water over the stain as soon as possible.

When passing a bad smell in the road, do not open the mouth to speak of it, but close it immediately and pass quickly on. Children should be taught to do this.

When making an open treacle tart or tartlets, mix two tablespoonfuls of very fine bread crumbs with the treacle. It makes it much nicer and prevents the treacle soaking into the paste and making it sodden.

Stewed fruit is nicer if a small quantity of sago is boiled separately and then mixed with the stewed fruit before sending it to table. The proportions should be two ounces of sago boiled in a pint of water to a quart of fruit.

Eggs that are to be kept should be stood on the small end of the egg, and not the broad end.

To keep the feet warm in cold weather, cut a sole to the size of the boot or shoe in thick brown paper and wear it.

Baking powder of superior quality can be made of three ounces of tartaric acid, four ounces of carbonate of soda, and half a pound of ground rice. Pound the tartaric acid in pestle and mortar till quite smooth; do the same separately with the carbonate of soda; mix all three well together in a basin and keep in a close fitting tin in a dry place.

To prevent made mustard from drying and caking in the mustard pot, mix a little salt when making it, and it should always be made with boiling water.

Chamois leather should never be washed in hot water, which hardens it, but in cold water, with either a little ammonia or a lather of soap.

Boots and gloves wear longer and better if kept for some time before wearing them. It is well to have a pair or pairs of each kept for some months before use.

Sweet puddings are much lighter and better if plunged into boiling water if they are to be boiled.

A tear in a dress, or the worn seams of umbrellas, may be neatly and effectually mended by bringing the edges together and putting over them on the under-side a piece of sticking-plaster, or tissue made for the purpose, cut in a strip to the size of the tear. In the case of thin muslin being torn, only gum or thin paste need be used.

Flannel should not be used in needle-books for sticking needles into, as flannel is often prepared with sulphur, which will rust the needles; a piece of fine linen or chamois leather is better.

When hanging meat in the larder, it is well not to put the metal hook through the meat itself, but through a loop of string tied on to the joint.

Too much care cannot be taken about constant changing of the water in which cut flowers are placed in rooms, as also to empty out and clean the ornamental china bowls in which flower pots are placed, and these should always be a couple of sizes larger than the pots, so as to allow of free ventilation; they are non-porous, and are not good for the plants unless there is room for ventilation. Plants should never stand in stale water.

To keep off rats, put tar round the holes they come out of. They are very clean creatures, and will not tolerate anything dirty or sticky on their fur.

The best lemonade is made with one lemon, one quart of water, and ten lumps of sugar. Peel the lemon, taking great care not to get any of the white under-skin, cut the lemon in half, take the pips out and squeeze out all the juice, add the sugar, and pour the water over it quite boiling, adding the thin yellow peel at the last. This can be drunk hot or cold.

Aberdeen sausage is a very nice breakfast or supper dish, made according to the following recipe: One pound of lean buttock steak, half a pound of fat bacon, two small teacupfuls of grated bread crumbs, one dessertspoonful of Harvey or Worcester sauce, one egg, one teaspoonful of salt, and half a teaspoonful of pepper. The beef and bacon to be finely minced and well mixed, then add the bread crumbs and other ingredients, and lastly the eggs. Form it all into a roll, not too long, and boil in a floured cloth tied at the end (not too tightly) for two hours. When done, cover it while hot with crisp bread-crumbs, and serve cold at the table.

Vegetable Soups.—Here is one that is most delicious:

Take three well-washed and scraped carrots, two turnips, a parsnip, a head of celery, a breakfastcupful of shelled peas, a lettuce, half a small cabbage, and some three or four young onions, with a bunch of savory herbs of all kinds. Cut the vegetables quite small, tying the herbs together; let them all stew in a couple of ounces of good butter until they begin to be tender, then turn them into a larger stewpan and cover with two quarts of water, adding a knuckle bone of ham or bacon if possible, and cook gently for about two hours.

Place a colander in a large basin, and rub all the contents carefully through this with the liquor. When all has been passed, dissolve another ounce of butter in the stewpan, stir into it a tablespoonful of potato or rice flour, add the vegetable puree next, stirring well all the time. Stir over the fire until it boils up again, then add salt and pepper to the taste and a small cupful of cream or new milk. Serve very hot.

Funnel Cakes.—Separate three eggs; beat the yolks until light; add to them a cup of milk—half a pint—and one cup of flour. Beat until smooth; add half a teaspoonful of salt and a teaspoonful of baking powder. Put this mixture into the funnel. Have ready a smooth frying pan containing just enough hot lard to just cover the bottom. Begin in the middle of the pan, allowing the batter to run through the funnel, winding it around and around. When the cake is brown on one side, turn and brown the other. Serve hot.

Potato Turnovers.—Boil some good mealy potatoes, and, when done enough, mash them, season with salt, and form into a firm paste with fine sifted flour and beaten eggs; roll out to about half an inch in thickness, and stamp out in rounds about five inches across. Upon one half of each round place a small quantity of savory mincement—ham, fish, or poultry—pleasantly seasoned and just barely moistened, and fold the other half over the mince. Press the edges together, mark prettily, and, when all are ready, place the turnovers in a wire frying-basket, and fry in sufficient quantity boiling fat to cover them entirely. When colored a delicate brown, drain carefully, and serve on a hot napkin with finely-minced parsley.

Mince Pies Made with Cold Meat.—For these mince, but not too finely, a little underdone beef, mutton, or poultry; season to taste, and mix with a third of its bulk of ham or tongue, and a little finely-minced parsley and shallot, then line some patty-pans with the paste, and put a good tablespoonful of mince into each. Cover each with a round of paste, pinching the edges well together, brush them over with beaten egg, and bake. Or roll the paste out very thin, cut it into rounds, place a tablespoonful of the mince on each, fold them over in half, pressing each into a half-moon shape, and fry in plenty of boiling fat. Drain, dust with minced parsley and coraline pepper, and serve very hot.

Tactlessness.—The underlying principle of tactlessness is not more nor less than self-absorption. The blunderer is looking at things simply from his own side, and is not taking into account the feelings of others at all. He says what is uppermost in his mind regardless of consequences, because he has not at all considered if there are likely to be any consequences; and in the end pretty severe account is sure to be reckoned with him by the inconsiderate people who insist not only upon having feelings, but in assuming it to be reasonable that the existence of these feelings shall be recognized. It is generally idle to attempt to remonstrate with a tactless man, since as little can be done in the way of reformation as in extracting from a fool his folly by never so thorough a course of braying in a mortar. Such persons are simply to be avoided.

R R R
RADWAY'S READY RELIEF

FOR INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL USE.
CURES AND PREVENTS

COLDS COUGHS SORE THROAT INFLUENZA BRONCHITIS PNEUMONIA SWELLING OF THE JOINTS LUMBAGO. INFLAMMATIONS

RHEUMATISM, NEURALGIA.

FROSTBITES CHILBLAINS HEADACHE. TOOTHACHE. ASTHMA.

DIFFICULT BREATHING.

CURES THE WORST PAINS in from one to twenty minutes. NOT ONE HOUR after reading this advertisement need any one SUFFER WITH PAIN.

Radway's Ready Relief is a Sure Cure for Every Pain. Sprains, Bruises, Pains in the Back, Chest, or Limbs. It was the first and is the only Pain Remedy

That instantly stops the most excruciating pains, allays inflammation, and cures Congestions, whether of the Lungs Stomach, Bowels, or other glands or organs, by one application.

A half to a teaspoonful in half a tumbler of water will, in a few minutes, cure Cramps, Spasms, Sour Stomach, Heartburn, Nervousness Sleeplessness, Sick Headache, Diarrhœa, Dysentery, Colic, Flatulency and all internal pains.

There is not a remedial agent in the world that will cure fever and ague and all other malarious bilious and other fevers, aided by RADWAY'S PILLS so quickly as RADWAY'S READY RELIEF.

50 cents per bottle. Sold by all druggists.

Radway's Pills

Always Reliable, Purely Vegetable.

Perfectly tasteless, elegantly coated, purge, regulate, purify, cleanse and strengthen. RADWAY'S PILLS for the cure of all disorders of the Stomach, Bowels, Kidneys, Bladder, Nervous Diseases, Dizziness, Vertigo, Costiveness, Piles.

Sick Headache,
Female Complaints,
Biliousness,
Indigestion,
Dyspepsia,
Constipation
And all Disorders of the Liver.

Observe the following symptoms, resulting from diseases of the digestive organs: Constipation, Inward piles, fullness of blood in the head, acidity of the stomach, nausea, heartburn, disgust of food, fullness of weight in the stomach, sour eructations, sinking or fluttering of the heart, choking or suffocating sensations when in a lying posture, dimness of vision, dots or webs before the sight, fever and dull pain in the head, deficiency of perspiration, yellowness of the skin and eyes, pain in the side, chest, limbs, and sudden flushes of heat, burning in the flesh.

A few doses of RADWAY'S PILLS will free the system of all the above named disorders.

PRICE 25 CTS. A BOX. SOLD BY DRUGGISTS.

WRESTLING IN INDIA.

INDIA is indeed the home of wrestling. The science is there regarded as a fine art, patronized by the aristocracy of the land, and highly popular with the masses.

The champion wrestlers enjoy a reputation as great and wide spread as the most celebrated bull fighters of the Spanish ring; idolized by the people, their names are on every one's tongue.

Indian wrestlers belong to a hereditary class. They are a special breed of men who have practized the art, and lived by it, for generations.

One occasionally hears of an outsider who may be possessed of abnormally developed muscles adopting the profession; but such is a rare exception, for the wrestler is generally trained from his infancy in exercises of a severe nature and diversified form, which have been handed down from his ancestors as the result of centuries of experience and actual practise. The efficacy of these old codes of training cannot be doubted when one sees their results in the finished pahlwan, as he stands erect and proud in the arena, his masses of knotted muscles glistening with all the polish of satin.

We ourselves are so passionately devoted to athletics in every form, that it would be interesting to have the opinions of our experts upon the advantages of the native systems of training.

We should undoubtedly pick up some useful wrinkles from the receipts of our Aryan confreres.

The style of wrestling adopted in India is cat'h-as-you-can. But the conditions are such that matches with European wrestlers are rarely brought off.

Some time ago a wrestler, said to be the champion of the world in certain styles, met the private wrestler of a leading rajah, a great patron of the sport.

The match came off in a large tent, and was witnessed by over three thousand spectators. The opponents faced each other, and tried for a few moments to grip each other by the back of the neck.

It was done so quickly that it was hard to see how it came about; but, suddenly, the champion was seen on his hands and knees on the ground, his opponent standing over him with one leg on either side of his body.

The native then entwined his arms around the body of the man, and though the latter weighed about seventeen stone, lifted him up from the ground, and seemed to test his weight.

Meanwhile the champion tried to manœuvre for an advantage by twisting his legs around those of his opponent, but he was no match for his dark opponent in either science or ability.

The native then slipped his hands within the small drawers worn by the other, and at this the latter raised his hands and seemed to be expostulating with the judges.

He had no sooner done so, however, than he was lifted up and sent revolving some ten feet away, like a ninepin, and he was again pounced on, and laid quietly on the flat of his back before he had time to gather his senses.

Whether it was fair wrestling or not it is hard to say, but the fact remains that the four judges, two being officers, at once gave a unanimous decision in favor of the native.

The oriental possesses one advantage in that his body is oiled; but this is done not so much to make slippery as to benefit his muscles, for the oil is rubbed into the skin till its existence is scarcely perceptible. Their agility and suppleness is little short of marvellous, and it is a common sight to see a man weighing seventeen or eighteen stone turn a double somersault or walk erect on his hands, just as a preliminary, to take the kinks out of his joints. The most eminent wrestlers in India are kept in the employment of the great rajahs and princes.

Though their actual pay may not be very large, they receive valuable gifts on winning their bouts. Amongst the sporting rajahs themselves the greatest rivalry exists over the prowess of their pet champions.

Thus, wagers of thousands of dollars are frequently laid between two princes, each backing his own nominees.

It would be derogatory to the dignity of an eastern potentate to appropriate the stakes won to his own use, so the perquisites fall to the actual victors in the contests.

A wrestler starts his professional career, as a rule, when about twenty years of age, and retires at about forty. Sometimes, however, he leaves the ring almost before his prime, and this occurs when he has won some great and signal victory.

As soon as he has thus gained some distinctive championship he avoids all possibility of his coveted laurels being snatched from him, by prompt retirement.

It was reported that the young wrestler who threw the champion decided that that should be his last appearance in the ring; and he now solaces himself on the thought that he is the champion wrestler of the whole wide-wide world.

They say that he has amassed about $400,000, and that he lives a quiet uneventful life upon the estate presented to him by his employer for his last great victory.

CRIMINALS' GAMES.

Mario Carara, a disciple of Cesare Lombroso, the Italian expert in criminal anthropology, has made special study of the sports that criminals engage in.

The innocent games of childhood, in the case of criminals are tinctured with cruelty, and sometimes accompanied by homicide. Criminals skip the rope, but part of the game is to trip up the jumper and let him fall heavily upon the stone pavement.

Criminals play leap frog, but the object of the game is that he who makes the "back" shall rise suddenly and violently just as the frog mounts and throw him to the ground.

The criminals play blindman's buff, but the man with the bandaged eyes carries a handkerchief bearing in one corner a jagged stone, a piece of hard, sharpened wood, or bit of iron. With this weapon he strikes those whom he pursues.

Another remarkable form of this game is for the blinded one to be struck by one or another of his companions if he fails to name the one that touches him.

The penalty is not the innocent one of the children's game, but a blow so severe that a physician has often to be called in after the game is over, and occasionally the sufferer is disabled for some time.

It has been found in those Italian reformatories where prisoners are not kept in solitary confinement that prisoners' games are often accompanied with bloodshed, and that it is almost impossible to prevent cruelties.

This is especially true where prisoners together, for they secrete tools and use them as weapons in brutal sports.

In one of these games the player has in each hand a stick having let in the end a keen metallic point. He interweaves his arms, revolving the stick with rapidity, and the game is for another prisoner to thrust his head between the arms and endeavor to follow the revolutions of the sticks without being wounded.

It usually happen that he receive fifteen or sixteen wounds, and comes out with a bleeding head, while now and then mortal wounds are received.

The victim in another game has his eyes bandaged and places his palm upon a table, with fingers spread fan like.

Another criminal repeatedly strikes between the fingers with a pointed instrument. If he wounds a finger then the two change places, and woe to the man who refuses the exchange.

The game is dangerous, though the criminals assert that the wounds to the fingers are not deep or severe, because, as they say, the metallic points are short and do not penetrate far—a grim form of philosophy.

The sport of criminals is accompanied by characteristic craft. This is, specially shown in the methods in which the newcomer is initiated into prison life. The novice is conducted into an improvised court chamber, where the judges are his fellow prisoners.

He is placed upon a stand and gravely tried on a pretended charge, and he has barely been condemned when the stand is suddenly drawn away, so that he is thrown violently upon the earth.

Many games necessarily imply resistance to pain as an absolute condition of success. For example, there is the game of "needles." One of the players places his closed fists upon the table, holding steadily two needles, one in each hand, the points being slightly exposed.

It is the game then for a champion to strike with his own fists those of the other, and it becomes a question of endurance between the one pricked with the needles and the one whose fists are beaten by the other's knuckles. There are contests in which the fingers and hands are wounded, and the scars are an honorable distinction.

The characteristic feature of all these games, which are the recreation exclusively of criminals in prison, is the love of combat, if, as is held by experts, sports are the means of working off the superfluous activity, in the case of prisoners there is a prevalence of great agility and litheness, which Prof. Lombroso considers a negative evidence of mental weakness, since it testifies to a greater development of the motorial centres, at the expense of the other cerebral centres.

But usually this physical energy is not properly used in the ordinary life of criminals, but finds outlet and enjoyment in sport.

Another characteristic of the games of criminals is the admiration shown for physical force, manifested in the docility with which the vanquished in such sports submit to the brutality of the victors—a thing observed among savages.

Finally, the insensibility to pain exhibited in the sports of criminals proves that such men are less acute in their physical senses as well as less sensitive to the pains of others, since what seems to others uselessly cruel is only the usual thing with criminals.

As the drunkard, his taste hardened by alcohol, has need of a stimulant constantly stronger, so in the case of the criminal, the nervous system demands stimulus so strong that to the ordinary steady-going individual it would be actually painful.

TO AMUSE THEIR GUESTS.—The news that Mr. Alfred de Rothschild is laying down a private cycling track, size six laps to the mile, directly opposite his residence near Tring, England, calls to mind other equally elaborate country house attractions.

A miniature steeplechase course round his grounds was a hobby with a well-known Irish nobleman. Hedges and a water jump were duly provided, and a capital view could be had from a little model grand stand.

Some years ago there was a great craze for the erection of swimming baths, both open and covered, in rural mansions. One such, being of very large size, was used as a skating rink when empty, the floor being of hard smooth concrete.

In France several wealthy people run a small amateur circus at their country seats. There is a proper sawdust ring, and every guest is expected to do something towards the amusing of the company, even if it be a little bit of clowning. The country people are often admitted to see these shows, which they much appreciate.

Many houses boast menageries of considerable extent, and quite a number of lions and tigers, and so forth, are to be found in these private collections; not to mention great numbers of other animals.

In an enormous glass house filled with lofty palms one gentleman has flocks of parrots, paroquets, and other birds, comparatively at liberty. Double doors prevent their escape when visitors come and go; and the scene inside resembles a little corner in a tropical jungle.

At one time a maze was a very popular country house attraction, and at least one individual regularly followed the calling of a maze constructor. Many of these ingenious and baffling arrangements are still in existence.

Not a few big houses boast switchback railways; and there is one with a sort of switchback waterfall, a long, narrow, concreted channel having been constructed on a sharp slope beside a river, down which the guests, seated in a boat, enjoy a rush of a hundred yards.

WITH what aims we do our duty matters very little, or even what our duty is, great or small, splendid or obscure. Only to find our duty certainly and somewhere, somehow, to do it faithfully, makes us good, strong, happy, and useful.

A FEAST OF FUN---FREE

THE ONLY PEER OF MARK TWAIN'S HUMOR

SAMANTHA AT SARATOGA

BY

JOSIAH ALLEN'S WIFE

(MARIETTA HOLLY)

100,000 SOLD at $2.50 Per Copy

FREE To Every Subscriber

Read this Extract from the Book:

And right here, let me insert this one word of wisdom for the special comfort of my sect, and yet it is one that may well be laid to heart by the more opposite one. If your pardner gets restless and uneasy and middlin' cross, as pardners will be anon, or even oftener—start them off on a tower. A tower will in 9 cases out of 10 lift 'em out of their uneasiness, their restlessness and their crossness.

Why I have known a short tower to Slab City or Loontown act like a charm on my pardner, when crossness was in his mean and snappishness was present with him. I HAVE KNOWN HIM TO SET OFF WITH THE MEAN OF A LION AND COME BACK WITH THE LINIMENT OF A LAMB

And jest the prospect of a tower ahead is a great help to a woman in rulin' and keepin' a pardner straight. Somehow jest the thought of a tower sort of lifts him up in mind, and happifys him, and makes him easier to quell, and pardners must be quelled at times, else there would be no livin' with 'em.

She takes off FOLLIES, FLIRTATIONS, LOW-NECKED DRESSING, DUDES, PUG DOGS, TOBOGGANING, etc.

OPINIONS OF NOTED CRITICS.

"Exceedingly amusing."—Rose E. Cleveland. "Delicious Humor."—Will Carleton. "So excruciatingly funny, we had to sit back and laugh until the tears came."—Saturday Evening Post. "Unquestionably her best."—Detroit Free Press. "Rich terse satire, coated with the sweetest of exhilarating fun."—Bishop Newman.

FREE!------Our Great Offer------FREE!

$10,000 CASH was paid for the copyright of this work, and until recently it was sold at $2.50. It is nicely bound, printed from new type, and on fine paper, and is richly illustrated with a number of humorous pictures by some of the best artists in the country.

Our Offer While the SATURDAY EVENING POST for one year is only $2.00 and while a great many thousands of "SAMANTHA AT SARATOGA" have been sold at $2.50 per copy, yet by a lucky turn of events we are enabled to and will (FOR A LIMITED PERIOD) mail, postage paid, a copy of this wonderfully funny book ABSOLUTELY FREE to every person sending us $2.00 for one year's subscription to the SATURDAY EVENING POST. Old subscribers sending for another year's subscription will also receive the book. If you want it send AT ONCE.

Address,

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,
726 SANSOM ST., PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Humorous.

NOW AND THEN.

A year ago I asked my love
To give to me the dainty glove
I'd snatched from her.
I knew that she was fond of me,
And thought it very strange that she
Should make demur.

We're married now. Almost a year
Has sped since people came to hear
Our wedding vow,
And now I realize why May
Was slow to give her gloves away—
I buy them now!

—S. J.

In the midst of death—The letter "a."

It seems foolish to lock pianos with the keys inside.

A good lawyer is not a necessity, for necessity knows no law.

What relation is that child to its father who is not its father's own son?—His daughter.

Mr. G.: That new neighbor next door goes singing about the house all day long.

Mrs. G.: She has no husband.

An advertiser in a daily paper offers board and residence, and completes the list of attractions by the announcement, "Cow—no other guests."

A health journal says that you ought to take three quarters of an hour for dinner. It is also well to add a few vegetables and a piece of meat.

Grace: I never saw any one with such a vacant expression as Cholly.

Lillian: No; he's always thinking of himself.

Prison visitor: Do you fear death, my good man?

Condemned Murderer: No; it's merely the terrible suspense.

"I read of a man last spring who was hypnotized and buried for several days."

"I don't doubt it. Some men will do almost anything to get out of house-cleaning."

"Will you always look up to me?" asked the museum giant.

"Yes, as long as you do not consider me beneath you," replied his dwarf wife.

Wife, indignantly: Oh! you can't impose on me with any such story as that!

Husband, helplessly: Well, thash th' best I can give you—I ain't no—hic—campaign committee, you know!

An old lady was asked her opinion about Mrs. Smith, her next-door neighbor.

"Well," she said, "I am not the one to speak ill of anybody, but I feel very sorry for Mr. Smith."

Scene—restaurant. Customer: Say, waiter, that chicken is old.

Waiter. Well, sah, I guess dat pullet was healthy, otherwise it wouldn't have got so old.

Belle: Tom doesn't care two cents for me.

Nell: How do you know?

Belle: He writes me letters on a postal card.

Buzby: Didn't Wiggins forget his lines at the amateur theatricals last evening?

Baxter: No; he only got them mixed up a little. Instead of saying, "I hear the tramp of approaching footsteps," he said, "I hear the footsteps of approaching tramps."

Mrs. Newlywed: Why don't you go to work?

Rollingstone Nomoss: Me trade is slack just now.

Mrs. Newlywed: What is your trade?

Rollingstone Nomoss: Pickin' de straw out o' strawberries.

Parson Goodman: Do you know where little boys go who go fishing on Sunday?

Bad Boy: Aw say—I ain't givin' away snaps, yer know. If yer lookin' for a good fishin'-hole w'y don't yer go find it yerself—same as everybody else does? Yer mustn't think I'm a jay.

"I never pretend to know a thing that I do not," remarked Brown. "When I don't know a thing, I say at once, 'I don't know it.'"

"A very proper course," said Fogg: "but how exceedingly monotonous your conversation must be, Brown."

Not long ago a theatrical manager wrote the following couplet as an advertisement for his comedy:

From half-past eight till half past ten
You laugh and laugh, and laugh again.

Imagine his surprise when a matter-of-fact compositor set up the advertisement and it appeared:

From 8.30 to 10.30
You laugh and laugh, and laugh again.

"I am here, gentlemen," said the pickpocket to his fellow-prisoners "as the result of a moment of abstraction."

"And I," said the incendiary, "because of an unfortunate habit of making light of things."

"And I," chimed in a forger, "on account of a simple desire to make a name for myself."

"And I," added the burglar, "through nothing but taking an advantage of an opening which offered in a large mercantile establishment in town."

But here the warder separated them.

ROYAL ORDERS.

The provisioning of a Royal Palace, however remunerative the office may be, is by no means the most enviable of tasks. In no small degree it resembles the catering for some huge barracks or even village. But there is at least one striking differences.

Everything ordered for the Queen of England's own private consumption has to be of the very best; and it is the duty of those in authority to see that nothing of an inferior quality is placed on the Queen's table.

Besides this it is the business of those who have charge of the commissariat to submit to her Majesty from time to time any newly-invented delicacies which, in their judgment, are likely to please the Royal palate.

I had a chat on this subject the other day with a well-known tradesman, who has served the Queen for a number of years.

"One great mistake the public always make," said my informant, "is to suppose that the stocking of the Queen's kitchen necessarily entails an enormous waste and extravagance. As a matter of fact the Royal kitchens are noted for an entire absence of waste.

"Although the Queen's repeated journeys from Balmoral to Windsor, and from Windsor to Buckingham Palace for a day or two, and then again from Windsor to Osborne, might lead one to imagine that the furnishing of provisions for the large train with which her Majesty is always accompanied must inevitably result in waste, the fact is that the food requirements are measured with such an infinite amount of care that by the time the Court moves there is practically nothing left. Indeed, no goods are taken in in large quantities; the rule is to buy things just as they are wanted.

"The commissariat of the Royal Palaces is under the control of the Lord Steward, and I can assure you the management of the department is anything but lax.

"The prices set down by tradesmen for commodities supplied to the Queen are most rigorously checked; and should any one item be above the market price the dealer in question gets his account back again for correction.

"However, in order to avoid confusion, the Royal tradesmen try to work at the same price—that is to say, two of one trade fix a reasonable price for the goods in which they deal and adhere to them when making out the Queen's bills.

"Everything is really done so fair and square that many tradesmen when submitting their prices include in the list the actual cost price of the articles."

"You wouldn't do that with the general public."

"Well, there is a great rage for economy in the Royal castles just now, and no one could be more particular as to price and quality than the Lord Steward.

"If by any mischance you send anything slightly inferior in quality you may be tolerably certain that the Royal custom, so far as you are concerned, has gone for ever.

"To give you some idea of the economical principles which have been established of late years in connection with the Royal household, I may tell you that formerly whenever a man brought a load of goods to the Palace he was given a glass of ale.

"Nowadays, no matter in what condition of thirst he may be, if he feels a hankering after a glass of beer he must get it 'round the corner,' and at his own cost, as ale at her Majesty's expense has been abolished. Again, whenever the postilions took the Queen for a drive they were rewarded with a glass of wine. This rule was also rescinded by a recent Lord Steward."

"How do they manage with the food in the palaces?"

"All goods on reaching their destination are checked by the clerks—there are four Clerks of the Kitchen—and entered as received, and then put away. The storeroom is, in fact, a kind of luxurious shop. Whenever the cooks want anything they have to go to the storeroom for it.

"No matter what they may require, nothing is handed to them before it has been weighed and the quantity entered in the store-book. If it is cheese the quantity required is cut and carefully weighed. Even sugar is put upon the scales."

"Is her Majesty partial to rich things?"

"The Queen lives on the very plainest of fares. By-the-bye, few people have any conception of the impetus which the Queen's presence in London gives to trade. The force of imitation is well illustrated here, for whenever her Majesty has a dinner party we always find that hundreds of people immediately entertain their friends in a similar manner. It is much the same when the Prince of Wales gives a big dinner party.

EVERYONE SMOKES THERE.—"A Havana man does not smoke in church," said a traveler who had recently returned from Cuba. "But that is about the only place where his lighted cigar is not visible.

"And he would not think of asking a lady's permission to smoke at the table or in a railway carriage, since the ladies themselves smoke just as freely as their husbands and brothers.

"Nevertheless a pipe is an unknown article in Cuba, cigars and cigarettes being alone used. The latter are made of strong Cuban tobacco, which is, however, pure and unadulterated.

"In every house or office building the porter, who sits in the entresol, is engaged all day long in adding to his income by rolling cigarettes.

"He has a little table in front of him, where the tobacco and paper are spread out, and he is constantly at work. A vast quantity of cigarettes is smoked there, as well as cigars. When the Cuban is not smoking cigars he is smoking cigarettes.

"But it must not be imagined that only good cigars are smoked in Havana. Some of the cheaper varieties are as bad as anything known to us in this country.

"The cigarmaker is paid only for the perfect cigars, the rejections in the best factories being smoked by the employes. But in some factories, where cigars not of the very finest quality are made, the rejected cigars are boxed and sold as 'seconds.'

"In all the factories the cigarmakers are allowed to smoke as much as they want of their own product and to take a pocketful of cigars with them when they leave at night. Of course, this is partly at their own expense, since they are paid for each cigar they hand in.

"By the way, anyone who wishes to continue to enjoy his cigar should not pay a visit to the place where it was made, since most Cuban cigar factories are characterised by defective sanitary arrangements, while cleanliness is not a conspicuous virtue of those employed in such places."

RIPANS TABULES REGULATE THE STOMACH LIVER AND BOWELS AND PURIFY THE BLOOD.

RIPANS TABULES are the best Medicine known for Indigestion, Biliousness, Headache, Constipation, Dyspepsia, Chronic Liver Troubles, Dizziness, Offensive Breath, and all disorders of the Stomach, Liver and Bowels.

Ripans Tabules are pleasant to take, safe, effectual, and give immediate relief. Sold by druggists.

PLAYS Dialogues, Speakers for School, Club and Parlor. Catalogue free. T. S. DENISON, Publisher, Chicago, Ill.

DOLLARD & CO.,

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1223 CHESTNUT ST. Philadelphia.

Premier Artistes IN HAIR.

WIG

Inventors of the CELEBRATED GOSSAMER VENTILATING WIG, ELASTIC BAND TOUPEE, and Manufacturers of Every Description of Ornamental Hair for Ladies and Gentlemen.

Instructions to enable Ladies and Gentlemen to measure their own heads with accuracy:

TOUPEES AND SCALPS. INCHES.
No. 1. The round of the head.
No. 2. From forehead back as far as bald.
No. 3. Over forehead as far as required.
No. 4. Over the crown of the head.

FOR WIGS, INCHES.
No. 1. The round of the head.
No. 2. From forehead over the head to neck, No. 2.
No. 3. From ear to ear over the top.
No. 4. From ear to ear round the forehead.

They have always ready for sale a splendid Stock of Gents' Wigs, Toupees, Ladies' Wigs, Half Wigs, Frisettes, Braids, Curls, etc., beautifully manufactured, and as cheap as any establishment in the Union. Letters from any part of the world will receive attention.

Dollard's Herbanium Extract for the Hair.

This preparation has been manufactured and sold by Dollard's for the past fifty years, and its merits are such that, while it has never yet been advertised, a good demand for it keeps steadily increasing.

Also DOLLARD'S REGENERATIVE CREAM to be used in conjunction with the Herbanium when the Hair is naturally dry and needs an oil.

Mrs. Edmondson Gorter writes to Messrs. Dollard & Co., to send her a bottle of their Herbanium Extract for the Hair. Mrs. Gorter has tried in vain to obtain anything equal to it as a dressing for the hair in England.

MRS. EDMONDSON GORTER.
Oak Lodge Thorpe,
Nov., 8, '88. Norwich, Norfolk, England.

NAVY PAY OFFICE, PHILADELPHIA.

I have used "Dollard's Herbanium Extract, Vegetable Hair Wash," regularly for upwards of five years with great advantage. My hair, from rapidly thinning, was early restored, and has been kept by it in its wonted thickness and strength. It is the best wash I have ever used.

A. W. RUSSELL, U. S. N.

TO MRS. RICHARD DOLLARD, 1223 Chestnut St., Phila.

I have frequently, during a number of years, used the "Dollard's Herbanium Extract," and I do not know of any which equals it as a pleasant, refreshing and healthful cleanser of the hair.

Very respectfully,
LEONARD MYERS,
Ex-Member of Congress, 5th District.

Prepared only and for sale, wholesale and retail, and applied professionally by

DOLLARD & CO.

1223 CHESTNUT STREET.

GENTLEMEN'S HAIR CUTTING AND SHAVING. LADIES' AND CHILDREN'S HAIR CUTTING.

None but Practical Male and Female Artists Employed.

Phila. and Reading Ry.

Anthracite Coal. No Smoke. No Cinder

On and after November 15, 1896.

Trains Leave Reading Terminal, Philada.

Buffalo Day Express Parlor and Dining Car, Black Diamond Express	daily	9.00 a m	Arr.
	Week-days.	12.30 p m	
For Buffalo, (Parlor Car) Buffalo and Chicago Exp. Sleeping Cars.	daily.	8.00 p m 9.45 p m	Dep.

Williamsport Express, week-days, 8.35, 10.10 a m, 4.05 p m. Daily (Sleeper) 11.30 p m.

Lock Haven, Clearfield and Bellefonte Express (Sleeper) daily, except Saturday, 11.30 p m.

FOR NEW YORK.

Leave Reading Terminal, 7.30, (two-hour train), 8.30, 9.30, 10.30, 11.00 a m, 12.45, (dining car), 1.30, 3.05, 4.00, 4.02, 5.00, 6.10, 8.10 (dining car) p m, 12.05 night. Sundays—8.30, 9.30, 11.30 (dining car) a m, 1.30, 3.55, 6.10, 8.10 (dining car) p m, 12.05 night.

Leave 24th and Chestnut Sts., 4.50, 11.04, a m, 12.57 (Dining car), 3.08, 4.10, 6.12, 8.19 (dining car), 11.58 p m. Sunday 4.00 a m, 12.14, (dining car), 4.10, 6.12, 8.19, (dining car), 11.58 p m.

Leave New York, foot of Liberty street, 4.30, 8.00, 9.00, 10.00, 11.30 a m, 1.30, 2.00, 3.30, 4.00 (two-hour train), 4.30 (two-hour train), 5.00, 6.00, 7.30, 9.00 p m, 12.15 night. Sundays—4.30, 9.00, 10.00, 11.30, a m, 2.00, 4.00, 5.00 p m, 12.15 night.

Parlor cars on all day express trains and sleeping cars on night trains to and from New York.

FOR BETHLEHEM, EASTON AND POINTS IN LEHIGH AND WYOMING VALLEYS, 8.05, 8.00, 9.00, 11.00 a m, 12.30, 2.00, 4.30, 5.30, 8.00, 9.45 p m. Sundays—8.25, 8.32, 9.00 a m, 1.10, 4.30, 8.00, 9.45 p m. (9.45 p m, does not connect for Easton.)

FOR SCHUYLKILL VALLEY POINTS.

For Phoenixville and Pottstown—Express, 8.35, 10.10 a m, 12.45, 4.05, 6.30, 11.30 p m. Accom. 4.20, 7.45, 11.05 a m, 1.42, 4.35, 5.53, 7.20 p m. Sundays—Express, 4.05, 9.05 a m, 11.30 p m. Accom., 7.00, 11.25 a m, 6.15, p m.

For Reading—Express, 8.35, 10.10 a m, 12.45, 4.05, 6.30, 11.30 p m. Accom., 4.20, 7.45 a m, 1.42, 4.35, 5.53, 7.20 p m. Sunday—Express 4.00, 9.05 a m, 11.30 p m. Accom., 7.00 a m, 6.15 p m.

For Lebanon and Harrisburg—Express, 8.35, 10.10 a m, 4.05, 6.30 p m. Accom., 4.20 a m, 1.42, 7.20 p m. Sunday—Express, 4.00 a m. Accom., 7.00 a m, 6.15 p m.

For Gettysburg, 8.35, 10.10 a m.

For Pottsville—Express, 8.35, 10.10 a m, 4.05, 6.30, 11.30 p m. Accom., 4.20, 7.45 a m, 1.42 p m. Sunday—Express, 4.00, 9.05 a m, 11.30 p m. Accom., 7.00 a m, 6.15 p m.

For Shamokin and Williamsport—Express, 8.35, 10.10 a m, 4.05, 11.30 p m. Sunday—Express, 9.05 a m, 11.30 p m. Additional for Shamokin—Express, week-days, 6.30 p m. Accom., 4.20 a m. Sundays—Express, 4.00 a m.

For Danville and Bloomsburg, 10.10 a m.

FOR ATLANTIC CITY.

Leave Chestnut Street and South Street Wharves: Week-days—Express, 9.00 a m, 2.00, 4.00, 5.00 p m. Accommodation, 8.00 a m, 6.30 p m. Sundays—Express, 9.00, 10.00 a m. Accommodation, 8.00 a m, 4.45 p m.

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